THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN *by COLONEL T.*

FEBRUARY 22
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NEW MASSES

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ELEPHANT ON A TIGHT-ROPE

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CHIANG KAI-SHEK'S STRANGE BOOK

by FREDERICK V. FIELD

GANGING UP WITH GANNETT

The plot against social security *by EDWARD EARLE STARR*

WASHINGTON'S TIME CAPSULES

by SAMUEL SILLEN

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: *"Heroes White and Black," by Herbert Aptheker; "Decision," a review of Edward Chodorov's play. "Letter to a Corsican," by Theodore Balk.*

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THE STAKES

Below are excerpts from two letters—one written by a merchant seaman, the other by a soldier to his friend. Better than we, the editors, ever could they tell what NM means to its readers:

Dear Friends: I am a merchant seaman and have just completed a long trip. I am sorry that I let the subscription expire. I had no intention to do so, I can assure you. I know of no other source of information which will give me the coverage of the developments which I obtain from NEW MASSES. Please renew my subscription as of date of expiration. I can't afford to miss the issues between then and now. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
George Watkins

San Francisco

Here is the other letter:

To NEW MASSES: I am sure you will be interested in a portion of a letter just received from a first lieutenant in the United States Army. ". . . I shall forever be grateful to you for having introduced me to NM, for now, more than ever, do I realize how much it has done for my understanding of the present world situation. I cannot help feeling sorry for the other officers and men at this camp who have not had the benefit of the education I received from the pages of that magazine. . . ."

Sincerely,
Joseph Spencer

New York

These are but two among many. That seaman, that first lieutenant, feel deeply about NM. And we believe you do too. For that reason we are certain that you will—if you haven't already—sent NM your contribution to its annual financial drive. To date we have received $6,700—about a thousand more than we received during the same period last year. That is somewhat better tempo than last week—but it is not good enough—not yet. Will you help make it good enough? (The blank on page 31 will help.)

THIS is something by way of being an art note. Not the usual kind (NM affairs have a way of not being usual). There was a time when people spoke about art in muted tones; they always spelled it with a capital A, and thought of it as something belonging in J. P. Morgan's parlor. Folk thought it was not for the hoi polloi. NEW MASSES is one of those in America who pioneered against this notion. For years we've talked about art as though it belonged to the people; and we've tried to see to it that it got to the people. For five years now, we've had our annual NM art shows to which the best artists of America contributed—and to which everybody was invited. We believed that a closer relation between the artist and his public is necessary; and we've tried to make it possible. Well, each year we've gotten more artists closer to more people than the year before. This year, if we read the signs aright, will see our best art show. The art arrangements committee—that means Rockwell Kent, Hugo Gellert, Minna Harkavy, William Gropper, Rafael Soyer, Philip Evergood, David Burliuk, Nicolai Cikofsky, Max Weber, Louis Lozowick, A. Refregier, and Chaim Gross—tell us that we have received a greater response from artists than ever before. Joseph Foster, of our staff, tells us we'll have a greater turnout of art lovers than ever before. The auction this year will be held at the home of the new ACA Gallery on East 57th Street, the former Marie Harriman Gallery. There will be a three-day exhibit preceding the sale, when opening bids on all works will be accepted. These bids can be entered any time prior to the auction and will serve as the starter. If not superceded by a higher figure, then the bid will be the sale price. The date: Exhibition, March 1 to March 4. Auction sale, Sunday, March 5, all day from 2 PM. Put them down on your calendar.

NEW MASSES
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NEW MASSES
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ELEPHANT ON TIGHT-ROPE

GOP facing gathering wrath of Negro voters. Republicans' strategy on anti-poll tax bill crippled by shameful record on soldiers' vote.

Washington.

THE Republicans in Congress have got themselves into a first-rate political mess. It is hard to tell whether they yet recognize the trouble they have made for their party by their obtuse tactics on the soldiers' vote bill. But even Republicans cannot blink away reality forever, and soon the party generals will wake up to the unpleasant fact that their ultra-caginess has landed them up to their necks in contradictions. Never since 1936, when party mentors took Hearst's advice and nominated Alf Landon because he gave out noises like Calvin Coolidge, high priest of the dear dead Golden Age, has the Republican Party so blatantly revealed its lack of perspective and leadership. As it approaches the 1944 elections, Republican leadership flounders between the extremes of over-confident arrogance and short-sighted opportunism.

In the first place, the Republicans plunged into the soldiers' vote fight with a lot of half-baked preconceptions. They frankly feared the way soldiers might ballot. As paunchy Joe Martin, House minority leader, repeatedly emphasized in private conversations, he considered the legislation a matter of practical politics and he knew that if the soldiers were given a chance at the ballot, the Republicans stood to lose at least five crucial states, among them New York, Illinois, and Michigan. Come what may, Martin pledged himself and his party to avert this disaster. So he exercised all his powers as martinet to hold the Republican House delegation in line to defeat the legislation. He succeeded in saving the Democrats from the embarrassment of having the only opposition to the measure come from southern reaction. Martin delivered the House Republicans to the poll-tax leadership of that vile little mountebank, John E. Rankin, Democrat of Mississippi—with the result that the Republicans presented President Roosevelt and the administration with a made-to-order issue in the coming campaign. It is regrettable that the House did not pass the amendment to the Rankin bill offered by Representative Marcantonio of New York. This amendment provided that "On every ballot distributed under the provisions of this act there shall appear a photo of suitable size of the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Rankin; that under said photo there shall apear the following words: 'Author of the bill and leader of the Republicans in the House of Representatives.'"

The Republicans emerged from the battle self-indicted as the executioners of democracy. No so long ago, party strategists thought they had everything under control. They anticipated tying the administration into knots through the first half of 1944 on every piece of crucial legislation—taxes, price control, subsidies, appropriations, and so on. In the final days of the campaign they expected to point an accusing finger at the Democratic administration's failure to get things done—and the voters would rush to the polling booths to send the Republican presidential nominee (Tom Dewey or Bob Taft or a lesser light like Warren or Bricker) to the White House with a rousing plurality. But since the Republicans have begun to strut about in the fine clothes of "states' rights," their plans have gone haywire in a big way.

In one sense, it was their very certainty of getting away with murder that crossed up the Republican high command. It is an ever recurring wonder to observers in Washington that the Republicans can so lack perspective. Perhaps their difficulty arises from the complete negativeness of their program—they are agin the government and agin Roosevelt in particular, and they are agin that upstart Willkie who every now and then mildly insists on a progressive approach to national questions instead of advocating straight oppositionism.

WITH a few exceptions, Republican leadership is dedicated to the proposition that progress is an abomination. Their hate for Franklin D. Roosevelt passeth understanding—a corroding, all-pervading loathing that dominates every "regular" willingness to sacrifice political profit for the spiteful satisfaction of killing any proposition favored by the President. If President Roosevelt endorsed love, the Republicans would denounce it as "New Deal collectivism." The war, the peace, the safety of the nation, the chance to win votes—all that is secondary to the lofty crusade of "Getting That Man."

During the soldiers' vote debate, the Republicans allied themselves with the most contemptible of the poll taxers, with Rankin, Dies, Cox, Starnes, "Cotton Ed" Smith, Eastland, and the whole crew of fascist-minded bosses from the South. The alliance may have had a momentary advantage—though the Republicans discovered to their horror that a sizable group of southern Democrats refused to follow Rankin, and the Republicans paid through the nose for any temporary advantage they may have gained. They had planned for months to emerge as the great champions of the anti-poll tax forces and thereby to refurbish themselves as "progressives." They had it all worked out—they would stall the anti-poll tax bill until the end of the session and then make a loud fight for it. If their stalling encouraged a poll-tax filibuster, the Republicans could blame de-

Rankin rides an elephant

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feat of the measure on the administration and the Democrats. If the anti-poll tax bill passed, the Republicans could claim full credit. It was all very neat until the soldiers' vote bill came along, and the Republicans joined with the southern reactionaries in a fight to preserve the poll tax under the shabby banner of states' rights.

The party had been rubbing its hands over the prospect of corralling votes among minority groups—particularly among the Negro people. The GOP publicity department had begun to warm over the chestnut that the Republicans are the bearers of the Lincoln tradition. The Negro vote was considered all but in the bag. What most people don't realize is that this vote can be decisive in more than one hundred congressional districts where elections are usually close and where Negro voters can shift the balance to either side. Then, too, the Republicans start with a functioning machine among the Negro people. They can count on a certain number of regular supporters going down the line for them.

It was the poll-tax issue that was to become the great bid for Negro backing—that, plus the constant abuses suffered by the Negro population (which cannot necessarily be blamed solely on the Democrats, but for which the administration could be made to suffer). On the record, the Republicans could point to Willkie's sympathy for the struggle of the dark-skinned peoples of the world, and to Willkie's further contributions in defense of Negro rights. No matter what Republican big-wigs think of Willkie, they are willing enough to use him to catch votes. The Taft wing assiduously cultivated Perry Howard, a Negro national committeeman from Mississippi willing to serve the highest bidder. Taft went so far as to intimate that he would vote for cloture in the Senate to assure defeat of the poll-tax. Rep. Bender, Republican of Ohio, had defended Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune and William Pickens during the Dies-poll-tax onslaught against them last year. Rep. Bolton, also of Ohio, changed her position on the poll-tax issue on Bender's advice. Even Joe Martin played the game.

Governor Warren of California and the Republican crowd in Missouri threw some patronage to Negroes loyal to the state machines. Mayor LaGuardia—claimed by Republicans only on very special occasions—had appointed Negro leaders to important city posts: Myles Paige to the court of special sessions, Jane Bolin to the domestic relations court, and Herbert Delaney as tax commissioner and later to a judgeship. Boss Joe Pew of Pennsylvania fell in line; he placed Emmett J. Scott, publicity director for the Negro branch of the Republican National Committee, in the job of personnel director of the 18,000 Negro workers in Pew's Sun Shipyards. Best of all, the invincible Tom Dewey had shown political intelligence by wooing the Negro vote in appointing Negroes to high positions when he was district attorney; and as governor, he selected C. B. Powell, editor of Harlem's largest newspaper, the *Amsterdam Star News*, to serve as the first Negro member of the state athletic commission; and he appointed Ellis Rivers as assistant district attorney and later supported him in his successful race for city court justice.

The Democrats, for their part, stood to inherit all the headaches of discrimination and maltreatment of black Americans. Every shortcoming of the Fair Employment Practice Committee could be used to belabor the administration. Jim Crow in the Army, the Navy's reluctance to allow Negroes to become officers or to join the WAVES, appeasement of the poll-taxers, even the riots fomented by Ku Kluxers and Nazi agents would be laid at the administration's doorstep. And this was facilitated by the hesitancy of certain groups within the Democratic National Committee and within the party machine to fight directly for the Negro vote. The Democrats, torn by the contradiction of being the party of Roosevelt and also the party of the poll-taxers and the Farleys, were both inefficient and backward in their work among Negroes.

Yet the Republicans muffed the ball. On the soldiers' vote they lined up with Rankin, and it was their crowd (with a few honorable exceptions like Bender and La-Follette of Indiana) who cheered themselves hoarse when Rankin hit the top notes of his racist hysteria. Having recemented the alliance with the worst of the poll-taxers, the Republicans discovered that it was neither so easy nor so profitable to break it off. The fate of the anti-poll tax bill is now anybody's guess. There are those who believe that the Republicans will try to obscure their ugly performance on the soldiers' vote by throwing their forces behind poll-tax repeal. But there are others who feel that the party no longer dares break its alliance with the southern reactionaries.

One characteristic of the Republican diehards is that given an inch, they seem unable to forego the temptation to hang themselves. The Republicans have publicly smeared themselves in the soldiers' vote fight and they have done so with maximum fanfare. This should be good news to those who realize that the main issue of winning the war and carrying through the Teheran decisions for a peaceful postwar world requires the drafting of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, and assuring him a functioning majority in the House and Senate.

Perhaps the Republicans, despite their incompetence, can still hope to hold on to some of their following among the older, more substantial Negroes. But this group is a minority. The younger ones, those who suffer most from discrimination, the hard-working majority, are likely either to support President Roosevelt at the polls (in the urban areas this can spell the difference between victory or defeat for Democratic candidates), or to stay away from the polls altogether as they have too often in the recent past. The Negro voter is both alert and practical. He is willing to support candidates from whom he can expect a minimum of sympathetic understanding and some desire to protect his basic rights. The experience in recent elections proves this many times over, most directly in New York City, where the Harlem population supported the Communist Ben Davis and the Republican Ellis Rivers regardless of party labels. Wherever a candidate has shown a disposition to recognize the problems of the Negro people, he has received strong support.

Too often the Democrats approach the Negro voter mechanically, or with condescension. Too often, the party refuses to run a Negro for office and instead offers a run-of-the-mill precinct hack. It is not enough to hand out leaflets now and then in Negro districts and let things go at that. Nor is it sufficient to make one Fourth of July oration to Negro voters during an election campaign. The Negro has been consistently abused and excluded; his natural reaction has been to shy away from the polls—"What difference does it make whom we vote for?"—unless he can be shown that he stands to gain by supporting a particular candidate. The Democratic campaigners dare not sit back smugly and point to the President's picture, trusting to luck and the weather. The problem is to penetrate Negro communities, to register the Negro voters, to get them to the polls, to help them take their rightful place in the community and the nation, to offer them candidates, including Negro candidates, who will command their support.

In this respect, the labor movement can make a profound contribution. But labor too must be willing to think creatively. The CIO, for example, has a splendid program on Negro rights. And the Hillman Political Action Committee of the CIO quite correctly stresses getting out the vote through local unions. So far as the Negro vote goes, however, it is not enough to rely on local union meetings. The fact is, Negroes as a group still are shy, inclined to stay at home instead of attending local gatherings. What is true of Negro men is doubly true of women, who have the added burden of housework and caring for the children. To reach the Negro electorate means to recognize obstacles and to overcome them. Contacts must be established with Negro organizations, especially church and neighborhood groups. Intensive house-to-house canvassing by squads of Negro and white doorbell ringers can alone stir the Negro people into action. The work may be difficult, but it promises to pay off richly.

Opportunities have been augmented by Republican stupidity. The issues emerged clearly enough during the debate on the soldiers' vote. All but a handful of Repub-

(*Continued on page 31*)

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CHIANG'S STRANGE BOOK

Ideas incompatible with China's sterling fight for national liberation. A "golden world" for whom? The opinion of the Chinese Communists.

LAST March, almost a year ago, a book of historic importance appeared in China. It commanded immediate attention for two reasons. One was that it was written by China's leader, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The second reason is the book's title, *China's Destiny*, which suggests that the author regards it as a major contribution.

The book was immediately plugged by organs of the Kuomintang. Its publication was announced in foreign newspaper dispatches. In China it was widely read and widely discussed. But *China's Destiny* has never appeared officially outside that country. Severe restrictions were immediately placed upon its export; its translation and publication abroad was forbidden. To date non-Chinese have not even been permitted to see a summary of its contents. It is understood that the Chinese authorities regarded the Generalissimo's work as too controversial for distribution beyond the confines of their country. Knowledge of its violently anti-American, anti-British passages, of its general invective against all foreign ideas and institutions, of its vicious polemic against the Chinese Communists and their armies, and of its passionate call for a China based upon a feudal-absolutism, worried the officials lest it lead to a misunderstanding of the role of the Chungking government.

In various ways considerable information about the book has nevertheless become available. Copies of the original Chinese edition have reached this country; parts of it have been translated. Numerous Chinese and foreigners who have read the book have later come out of China to spread news of its contents and significance. And in the January issue of *The Communist* the first detailed commentary upon it has appeared in the form of a document by Chen Pai-ta received from Yenan, capital of the Northwest Border Provinces. We are, therefore, now in a position to discuss this book written in the midst of the war by China's leading figure.

In doing so I am conscious of the fact that difficult problems are raised. Chiang Kai-shek is the head of one of the four great powers of the United Nations. He leads and has led the nation which has been actively engaged against the fascist enemy for a longer time and with perhaps more suffering than any other nation. His leadership is acknowledged, and indeed, unquestioned, by all groups of the Chinese people, even by those for whom his policies have made cooperation most difficult. One recalls with the greatest admiration some of the Generalissimo's speeches during the fall and winter of 1937 when he was rallying the country and the armies for unity and determination against the Japanese aggressor.

THE successful and efficient prosecution of the war demands the utmost unity not only within each of the United Nations but also among them and their people. Teheran and Cairo symbolize the need in this direction. For the sake of unity we have put aside all disputes, all issues, except the central one of the struggle against fascism. We are, therefore, not interested in raising controversy over China, except as the central issue of the war is involved.

But along comes a book like *China's Destiny* expressing the social and political philosophy of the President and Generalissimo of China so thoroughly contradictory to the necessities of coalition and anti-fascist war that to shut one's mind to it would be to betray our own interest in total victory. And particularly is this true in the context of recent Chinese developments. *China's Destiny* was published on the eve of the worst threat of civil war instigated by the Chungking reactionaries since the murderous attack upon the New Fourth Army two and a half years before. It appeared at a time—not yet past—when all democratic forces, within China and abroad, were pressing Chungking to the utmost to liberalize its policies in order to achieve unity against the common enemy. Last spring marked the beginning of a period—and we are still in it—when repeated pleas were being made, conspicuously by Madame Sun Yat-sen, to Americans and others to align themselves and give active support to the popular forces in China struggling against the rising power of reaction in the government.

Consequently discussion of the book not only cannot be avoided, but it becomes a duty to give it the widest publicity. In an introduction to the Chen Pai-ta article in *The Communist*, Earl Browder writes, "We believe that . . . a policy of concealment is a mistaken and dangerous policy, that it serves to intensify the crisis in China and not to alleviate it, and that it prevents American public opinion from exerting its proper influence in the matter of our own nation's role in relation thereto. Americans cannot be left in ignorance of a situation which threatens a fatal weakening of a vital sector of the Allied front against Japan in the Far East."

CHIANG KAI-SHEK has been described as a man expertly capable of riding a small boat in a turbulent sea but unable to calm the waves. That, of course, is just another way of calling him a political opportunist. That he has great capacity for

"News Arrives," woodcut by Liu Te Hua.

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leadership is undeniable. To have remained at the helm of the Chinese nation, with only brief interruptions, from 1927 on is an indication that he possesses outstanding qualities. But to say that he has an accurate historical perspective or that he has any true understanding of democracy is unwarranted in view of the record and is belied by *China's Destiny*. We deal with a man, therefore, who when liberal forces are dominant in his political entourage, finds his place among them, but when reactionary forces gain the ascendency, takes the direction of his leadership from these forces instead. He skillfully balances his small boat whatever the waters.

By way of illustrating this point let me quote two statements made by Chiang Kai-shek with respect to the question of unity with the Communists. Both were made in decisive periods of Chinese history when unity spelled victory and disunity defeat. In December 1925, a few months after the death of Sun Yat-sen and in the period preparatory to the Northern Expedition, Chiang Kai-shek wrote as follows in the school annual of the Whangpoa Military Academy: "The school, which is the creation of the Kuomintang, is composed of Communists and non-Communists. Both groups are eager to fight under the Kuomintang flag for the realization of Dr. Sun's principles. I too am willing to lie beside the graves of those who have already fallen as martyrs to the National Revolution, the Three People's Principles and Communism. I, therefore, appeal to those of us who are still alive not to discriminate against one another nor to show any disunity."

How very different was Chiang's attitude when at the closing session of the Kuomintang's Executive Committee meeting in September 1943, he addressed himself to "the Chinese Communist problem" and accused the Communists of "assaulting national government troops and forcefully occupying national territory, and of failing to live up to the pledges made in their declaration of September 1937, supporting a National United Front"! (For a detailed analysis of the falsity of these charges, see my article on "China's Internal Crisis" in the Nov. 2, 1943, issue of NEW MASSES).

In *China's Destiny* Chiang Kai-shek completely ignores the heroic role played by the Communists in the 1924-26 revolutionary period, years of a united front to which, as we have just seen, he himself gave generous lip-service at the time. Chen Pai-ta tells us that "Chiang has disregarded all the main historical facts of the first Kuomintang-Communist cooperation and has made false, vicious accusations against the heroic and patriotic Chinese Communist Party. There are provocative words in this part of the book aimed at inflaming the people's enmity against the Chinese Communists."

In 1925 the liberalizing, unifying influence of Sun Yat-sen still dominated the political scene in which Chiang operated. He balanced his boat in those democratic waters. Today, however, his party, the Kuomintang, and the national government of China have become dominated by an unscrupulous gang of reactionaries more frightened of the democratic might of the Chinese people than of defeat at the hands of the fascist enemy or a negotiated peace with the invader. The Generalissimo therefore rides his boat on a sea of reaction.

There is, of course, far more to the political picture of China's President than is implied by such a limited figure of speech. His recent book is unequivocally reactionary, feudalistic, authoritarian, isolationist, anti-democratic. If used to guide the destiny of the Chinese nation it would result in turning back the pages of Chinese history to the misery, squalor, and ignorance of the dark ages. If the attempt were made to establish the feudal-absolutism for which the book argues, the Chinese people would be torn asunder as they resisted fascism. The emergence of a free, independent, democratic China would be indefinitely delayed. Of more immediate concern to Americans, a trend in the direction advocated by Chiang's book would destroy all possibility of coalition war with China as a powerful partner in the struggle to exterminate the Japanese fascists.

The question therefore arises whether *China's Destiny* is to be regarded as the culmination of the Generalissimo's political career, as the embodiment of ideas toward which he has been moving in the last twenty years, or merely as a tactic for balancing his political boat in his present reactionary environment. If the former, Chiang Kai-shek must definitely be put down as a man whose leadership is incapable of rallying the Chinese people to complete victory. If the latter, Chiang remains a leader with whom we can cooperate, taking as our main task the strengthening of China's liberal forces and the weakening of the group now so influential in Chungking.

The overwhelming evidence from China supports the second view. The very first sentence of Chen Pai-ta's critique in *The Communist* says that "many people in Chungking have suspected that the book was really written by Tao Hsi-sheng." Tao is characterized as "a person . . . widely infamous for his association with the Nanking traitors" and Chen refers to Tao's "constant advocacy of fascism, his opposition to the United Nations, and his continuing ideological links with Wang Ching-wei." In other words, the Chinese Communist suggests that Chiang has permitted himself to be used as the dupe of the worst elements now in Chungking. This does not weaken the force of the extremely sharp criticism of Chiang himself in Chen's article. It does, however, tend to focus the political problem upon eliminating from leadership those reactionaries who surround Chiang, and of whom Tao Hsi-sheng may be taken as a symbol.

It is clear that Chiang opened himself to severe censure by permitting himself to be so used, not only in the writing of *China's Destiny*, but also in all the other disruptive moves undertaken by the Chungking reactionaries. The Chinese Communist Party's strong position against the book and against the defeatists who have been emerging from the Chinese capital is designed to destroy the reactionaries, to win the Generalissimo away from them, and to strengthen the forces of progress.

The policy of the Chinese Communists from 1937 to the present has been consistently aimed at these objectives. Repeatedly, and even during the worst periods of crisis, such as last summer, they have appealed for a democratic unity under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. The strategy is to calm the waters on which Chiang rides his boat. What the interests of the Chinese masses and the interests of the United Nations as a whole demand in the war against the Japanese foe is the complete routing of the Chungking reactionary-defeatists and the reemergence of a liberal-democratic government with Chiang as its leader.

The character of Chinese reaction is amply clear from *China's Destiny*. Through that book we can get to know the nature of the problem which the Chinese people have asked their foreign allies to help them solve. For this reason it is of the utmost importance that the book become widely known. Attempts on the part of American organs of news and opinion to suppress knowledge of *China's Destiny* do the war effort a disservice.

The only public document on the subject now available to the American public is, as I have said, Chen Pai-ta's critique in the January *The Communist*. It deserves the widest possible attention for its author ably reveals the contents of Chiang's book while subjecting it to devastating political criticism. "Out of the 213 pages of the book," Chen writes, "only twelve and a half deal with the war problem, while the bulk of the book deals with internal problems—opposition to liberalism and Communism and advocacy of compradore-feudalist fascism or the New Absolutism (formally still wearing the mask of the Three People's Principles)."

The thesis of the book starts thus: ancient China provided a "golden world" to which the Chinese people must now return; the economy of ancient China was in perfect balance; the social organization, proceeding from individual to family to clan, provided stability in social and political relationships; the social customs,

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consisting of "the elements of faith, honesty, hard work, plain life, esteem of propriety and righteousness, and comprehension of purity and modesty," explain "why the Chinese nation could survive in the world for a long time"; in the realm of ancient ethics, "The original philosophy of life of China, created by Confucius, developed by Mencius, and explained by the Confucian school of the Han Dynasty, formed a lofty system of its own, and is superior to any other philosophy in the world."

Then what happened? According to Chiang, foreign influences came in to wreck this "golden world." "Since the unequal treaties were concluded the cultural circles of China lost their self-confidence. They followed blindly the theories of the foreigners and some introduced the European thoughts of the eighteenth century to destroy the spirit of the 'rule by law' among Chinese citizens." Chiang maintains, in other words, that the old China represented the optimum civilization, which was broken down by the onslaught of foreign ideas. How, we may ask, could foreign imperialism have had such an effect upon a nation of 400,000,000 contented, well-organized people, whose economy, social life and ethics were in perfect adjustment? Was it not the fact that ancient Chinese despotism, refusing to make the changes demanded by the breakdown of feudal economy, had become corrupt and degenerate, and had prepared the way for the imperialist invasion by permitting the body politic of China to become thoroughly rotten? Has not Chiang substituted cause for effect? And if he today advocates a return to this mythical "golden world" is he not calling for a return to barbarism?

The book goes on to trace Chinese "history." The Kuomintang came forward, a knight in shining armor, to regenerate the Chinese nation. Chiang writes: "The Kuomintang arose from the original, national moralities, with affection, faith, responsibility, and duty as the basic principles of organizing the party. Unlike other parties and groups, it does not use dexterous tricks and cruel intrigues at all, nor does it resort to self-interest and selfishness as its instinct of combination." Does he forget that the Kuomintang was a small, weak group of patriotic men under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen, a group without an army and without popular support until Sun's wise guidance brought about an alliance with the Chinese and Soviet Communists? Does he forget—or more to the point—does he want the world to forget that it was only through this alliance that the enthusiasm of the Chinese masses was won, that great armies were developed and led, that the National Revolution swept the nation in the 1924-26 period? He knew this well in 1925, as the quotation I have cited from his own writings of that period indicates. Why, if he is not to travel the road of disunity, does he twist history today?

"Sharpshooter," woodcut by Liu Te Hua.

CHIANG KAI-SHEK, or those for whom he permits himself to speak in this book, examines the 1927-37 period of civil war. All the fault, he says, lay with the Communists. It was they, he alleges, who sold out the revolution. Can it be that the Generalissimo forgets the brutality and horror of the Shanghai massacre of Chinese workers which began on April 12, 1927, and for which he was responsible? Can he forget the deal he made with a group of Shanghai bankers at the gates of Shanghai in those fateful days whereby in return for exterminating the "Reds" from the ranks of the Kuomintang he obtained a loan of $30,000,000 with which to set up a new and reactionary government at Nanking? Does he believe that the world, and especially the Chinese masses, can ever erase from their memories the frightfulness of those days so vividly told in Andre Malraux's classic *Man's Fate*?

The Chinese Communists and all other non-right-wing Kuomintang groups share the role of villain with foreign ideas and institutions—whether American, British, Russian, whether Rousseau's *Rights of Man*, twentieth-century democracy or Soviet Communism; whether missionary, commercial, or political; whether fascist or anti-fascist. At one point Chiang writes: "As to the struggle between liberalism and Communism, it is merely a reflection of the opposition of Anglo-American thought to that of Russia. Such theories and politics are not only unfit for the national life and the people's livelihood of China and opposed to her original cultural spirit, but they also reveal that their promoters have fundamentally forgotten that they are Chinese and have lost the standpoint of learning for China and applying their learning for China."

The book's thesis is accordingly a denial of internal democracy, a plea for a return to feudalism under the authoritarian dictatorship of the Kuomintang, a repudiation of international cooperation or contact on any basis whatsoever, and a demand for complete isolation in a Chinese Dark Age. Chen Pai-ta writes: "The central idea of this book is actually 'one party, one principle, one leader,' or that the Kuomintang is China and vice versa. The thought, 'I am the state,' of the French tyrant Louis XIV, is completely revived here. To the citizens and youth of the whole country this chapter (VII) is full of words of threat and enticement, compelling them to join the Kuomintang and the San Min Chu I Youth Corps. In relation to all Communists, however, it is a pretext for slaughter."

CLEARLY revealed in the pages of this book we find the treacherous intentions of that clique in the Chinese government and in the Kuomintang who have politically kidnapped Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. If permitted to continue their dangerous course nothing short of disaster will overtake the Chinese people. If allowed to continue to hold China in subjection through disunity the war of the United Nations against the Japanese beast will be indefinitely prolonged and rendered incalculably more costly.

That is why we must take to heart the words recently addressed to American workers by Madam Sun Yat-sen, widow of the father of the Chinese Revolution whose heritage has been so grossly distorted in *China's Destiny*. "The Chinese people," she says, "are strong in defense of their own soil as proved by their resistance through seven years. But reaction and fascism are strong also. This is proved by the betrayal of Wang Ching-wei and of many army generals, by the increased ease with which the Japanese can operate in different parts of our country, by the diversion of part of our national army to the task of blockading and 'guarding' the guerrilla areas, by the fact that some still hold private profit above the national interest, by the oppression of the peasantry, and by the absence of a true labor movement in most of our territory.

"American labor can best express its interests in China's resistance by insisting that the products of its efforts and the gifts it makes be equally distributed to every force in China, wherever situated, that is actively engaged in operations against Japan—and to no force that is otherwise engaged.

"It can express this interest in China's democracy by going on record against the threat of civil war which some Chinese reactionaries are preparing in order to destroy a democratic sector of our struggle. . . ."

FREDERICK V. FIELD.

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HEROES WHITE AND BLACK

America celebrates the birthday of Lincoln and Douglass. The "grandeur of this slave-born American." By Herbert Aptheker. First of two articles.

PARENTS never weary of talking about their offspring and contemplating the miracle of their production. Similarly the people never weary of talking about the splendor of their heroes and the magnificence of their characters. The American people celebrate this month the birthdays of two of their staunchest sons, Frederick Douglass, who aroused America's conscience, and Abraham Lincoln, who interpreted and harnessed that conscience. Each was of the common clay, each knew the stench of poverty, each loved the people.

Living in the same era, both devoted themselves particularly to that era's basic problem—the destruction of chattel slavery. Other problems gained their attention and aroused their efforts, too. Lincoln and Douglass denounced lynch law a century ago. They defended collective bargaining and labor's right to strike when both were still frequently considered violations of common law. They excoriated racial and religious bigotry in the severest terms. They enunciated the concept of just and unjust wars and actively opposed the attack upon Mexico in 1845. They iterated and reiterated their conviction in the righteousness of democracy and the absolute supremacy, indeed, the sanctity, of the will of the masses. And Douglass actively championed the cause of women's rights, including the right to vote, with the earliest pioneers of that movement in America.

But human slavery was the great wrong and the mortal danger of their time, and both, in their own ways, devoted their lives to its abolition and, by so doing, to the continued existence of their native land.

In the simple and modest manner that has invariably characterized the world's great men and women, Douglass said of himself: "My part has been to tell the story of the slave. The story of the master never wanted for narrators." Yes, the slaveowners have had and have today many spokesmen, but never have they had and never will they have one of the stature and grandeur of this slave-born American who, escaped from slavery, made himself the incorruptible and unquenchable voice of his people.

ENTERING the Abolitionist movement in 1841, a critical period in its history, Douglass represented the embodiment of that for which all adherents of the movement had been praying—one who himself knew slavery and was eloquent, impressive, energetic, and fearless. There he stood, a magnificent figure, impregnable, unswerving, bearing slavery's scars upon his back, and suffering, as he spoke, the anguish of knowing that a brother and four sisters were yet slaves.

The technique of the "colossal lie" is not new. Each tyranny uses it, and the slavocracy utilized it with a vengeance, to wit: slavery is delightful; the Negro has no desire to be anything but a slave. White men and white women could and did denounce these vicious fantasies, but Negroes, *and only Negroes,* could *demonstrate* their absurdity. They did, and leading them was Frederick Douglass. Where Douglass went, there went the conscience of America, and he gave it no pause. Every village north of the Mason and Dixon line saw this man and heard his message. Was no hall available? Very well, he walked the streets clanging a bell and announcing his presence, and held forth under the clouds. Was there no one to offer him food? He would go hungry, but remain vocal. Was there no shelter? He would sleep in a barn or field. Was he to be mobbed? He would resist, until with arm broken and head bloody, he would be left for dead. But he would arise, wash away the blood, bandage the arm, and continue to bear witness for those in chains.

He took his message to England, Scotland, and Ireland, and joined his pen to his tongue. From 1847 to the end of the Civil War he issued a weekly newspaper, and in 1845 wrote the first version of his autobiography. It was revised and enlarged several times; it was many times reprinted,

Soldiers of a Negro regiment of the Union Army fight the Battle of Milliken's Bend in the Civil War.

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and translated into French, German, and Swedish, reaching scores of thousands.

Douglass led in developing political parties devoted to the cause of abolition, thus helping to rescue that movement from the pacifistic, anarchistic sectarianism of William Lloyd Garrison that, from about 1845 on, hung like an albatross about its neck. He actively participated in the illegal underground railway, and was elected president of the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1847. To Douglass the enemy of slavery in the presidential campaign of 1860 was apparent—more so than to many avowed Republicans—and, as he tells us, he "threw" himself "with firmer faith and more ardent hope than ever before" into the effort to elect Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, Douglass immediately saw that its mission was "the liberation of the slave as well as the salvation of the Union." He did more than any other single person to develop sentiment for this idea and to make its realization inevitable by getting Negro soldiers, including two of his sons, into the Union army, thus bringing the army into accord with its character as an army of liberation. This transformation was not easily accomplished and was not automatic. It came as the result of what Douglass aptly termed "the educating tendency of the conflict." It came as a result of great pressure, much soul-searching, and the necessities of a people's war. And it came only after many setbacks.

Before the outbreak of actual hostilities the President in his first inaugural address had expressed his willingness to support a proposed constitutional amendment (which had passed Congress) to make perpetual the institution of slavery where it already existed. After the commencement of hostilities, the Secretary of State was at pains to inform friendly nations that slavery was in no way involved in the conflict. The administration pressed plans for the colonization of free Negroes, the Union Armies ordered fugitive slaves to return to their masters and at times acted as hunters of runaways. Negroes were refused admittance into the armed forces, anti-slavery officers were rebuked, transferred, or forced to resign, and the commander of the Army of the Potomac was, in Douglass' words, "more zealous in his efforts to protect slavery than to suppress the rebellion."

Despair overwhelmed many friends of freedom and made them ineffective Jeremiahs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's brother, Calvin, wrote to Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury: "Our government gives rewards to defeat and shame, and punishes success and honor. Imbecility and treachery are sure of favor; fidelity and energy are equally sure of hostility and disgrace."

Frederick Douglass was not one of these. His "heart believed while it ached and bled." And it was a reasonable belief, for Douglass knew the character of each contestant, and knew that the triumph of the South would mean both the descent of his people into the uttermost depths of night and the death of the first, and at that time the only, Republic avowedly devoted to the people's advancement. The triumph of this republic, on the other hand, would guarantee important immediate advances for the Negro, make possible his further progress, and also secure the continued life of the world's leading experiment in democracy. "We came to the conclusion," said Douglass, "that the hour and the man of our redemption had somehow met in the person of Abraham Lincoln."

And, as Douglass stated, while one could point to much vacillation and back-tracking by the Lincoln administration, he could also point to considerable progress: the Negro republic of Haiti was recognized and her minister duly received in Washington; the law against the foreign slave trade was for the first time vigorously enforced, and a convicted foreign slave trader was actually hanged; the internal slave-trade and slavery itself were abolished in the District of Columbia; the property of rebels was confiscated; the Army was directed to receive and protect fugitive slaves; Negroes were allowed to enter the military service; their pay scale was equalized; a bounty was given them for volunteering, as it had been given to white men; and halfway through the struggle, a policy of emancipation of the slaves of rebels was finally adopted.

In each of these progressive steps Douglass was a leading factor, most notably in the organization of public sentiment for the Emancipation Proclamation, and in persuading the government to employ Negro soldiers. He then threw himself with typical vigor into the effort to recruit Negroes and was responsible in great part for enrolling the men of the immortal Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Massachusetts Volunteers.

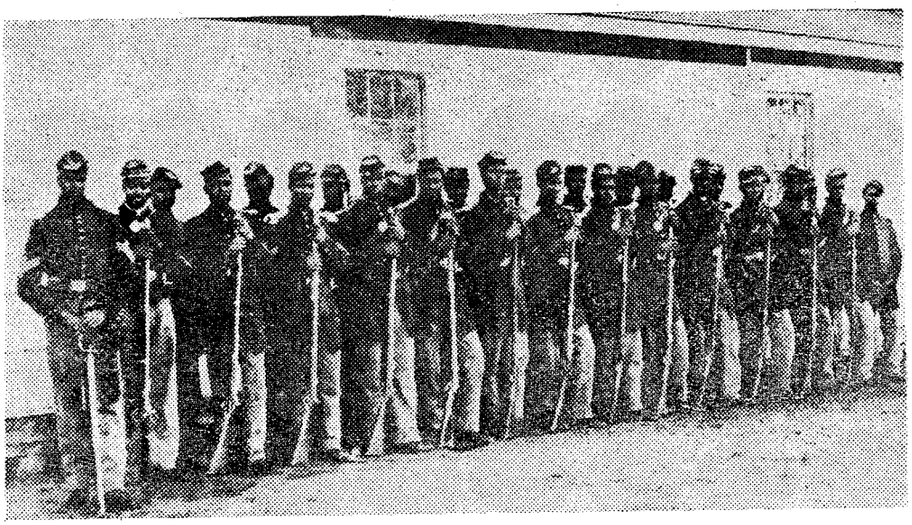
The editorial Douglass wrote for his Rochester newspaper March 2, 1863, titled "Men of color, to arms!" was widely reprinted and was distributed as a broadside throughout the country. Its effect was tremendous in its time, and it retains its spirit and timeliness to this day.

Said Douglass: "There are weak and cowardly men in all nations. We have them amongst us. They tell you this is the 'white man's war'; that you 'will be no better off after than before the war'; that the getting of you into the army is to 'sacrifice you on the first opportunity.' Believe them not; cowards themselves, they do not wish to have their cowardice shamed by your brave example. Leave them to their timidity, or to whatever motive may hold them back. . . . I urge you to fly to arms, and smite with death the power that would bury the government and your liberty in the same hopeless grave." Eighty thousand Northern Negroes and one hundred and twenty-five thousand Southern Negroes served as soldiers in Lincoln's army, thirty-seven thousand of them dying in action, while another two hundred thousand served as laborers for that army—and this force, according to Lincoln, meant the difference between a Union victory and a Union defeat.

While not a few of the old-time Abolitionists felt their work was done with Appomattox, this was not true of Douglass. He fought like a tiger to make the Negro's freedom real and living by securing political and economic guarantees for equality and justice. No one did more than he to get the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments added to the Constitution. Stubbornly he fought against the betrayal of the Reconstruction effort from its genesis under Johnson to its culmination under Hayes, ever repeating that unless "the ballot-box, the jury-box, and the cartridge-box" were available to the Negro, his freedom and well-being and the freedom and well-being of the nation would suffer.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

[Mr. Aptheker's second article will appear next week.]



Soldiers from one of the Negro regiments in the Civil War.

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GANGING UP WITH GANNETT

National Physicians Committee, offspring of defeatist publisher, spearheads an attack on social security. Aids GOP old guard in anti-Teheran maneuvers.

THE current campaign being carried on by the most reactionary elements of the organized medical professional against the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill (S 1161) is more than merely another round in the perennial battle which the ruling clique of the American Medical Association has waged against the medical aspects of the Roosevelt administration's social security program. It is closely coordinated with the political maneuvers of the GOP old guard to nullify the social gains of the New Deal and secure a victory for anti-Teheran reaction in 1944.

An AMA lobby annihilated the section of the original Social Security Act which dealt with the proposed national health program. This silent coup de grace was executed with so much finesse that few progressives outside the medical profession were ever aware that such a section of the Social Security Act had been contemplated. All might have been serene but for the unceasing, courageous efforts of the Committee of Physicians for the Improvement of Medical Care, a group of socially-minded doctors, which aimed at very little more than an honest discussion of the problems of more equitable distribution of medical care. Nothing so drastic as an airing of the issues before the "lay public" was advocated, but merely a more extensive consideration of these questions "within the family" of the medical profession's rank and file. But even this moderate objective was enough to bring down the wrath of the AMA autocrats upon the heads of the Committee of Physicians, although it includes many of the most eminent medical scientists at Harvard, Yale, and Johns Hopkins—most of whose social philosophies are far more conservative than that of the New Deal. The committee was denounced by the AMA, accused of using devious methods, and even called by some "a medical CIO."

Only after a prolonged struggle was the committee granted the opportunity of inserting an abbreviated statement of its purposes in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, which had been attacking it constantly while refusing to publish articles or letters from doctors who expressed contrary views.

At the present time the czars of organized medicine are engaged in a gigantic propaganda offensive against the public health provisions of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security bill (S 1161). The ordinarily dignified editorial page of the AMA's *Journal* has this time descended to Hearstian levels of abusiveness and misinterpretation. The spearhead of this onslaught is, however, a mysterious group backed by large financial resources: the National Physicians Committee for the Extension of Medical Service. This illegitimate offspring of Frank Gannett, publisher associated with defeatists, and the most reactionary elements in medicine, was born suddenly four years ago without the prior knowledge of most members of the profession. The committee has distributed millions of pamphlets to doctors as well as important groups of laymen. Pamphlets are given out free in Whelan drug stores. Editorials against "political domination" of medicine, etc., have begun to appear "spontaneously" in many newspapers throughout the country (including Captain Patterson's New York *Daily News*.)

Let us examine the issues raised by the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill's medical provisions that have evoked this reactionary crusade, which seeks to weave a web of confusion around such catchwords as "socialized medicine," "political domination," etc. The bill hardly goes far enough toward meeting the need for a national health program after the war. It bends over backwards to make concessions to the conservatism of the medical profession; but it represents an important if minimal step toward a more equitable distribution of the great medical resources of the country. Nevertheless, the reactionary elements in the AMA leadership cling stubbornly to the status quo, fighting the bill with a torrent of epithets and distortions lest it win the support of not only progressive, but even more conservative and cautious sections of the "lay public."

In brief, there are three separate and distinct respects in which the existing method of distribution of medical care might be modified: (1) *The system of remuneration of the doctor* (fee-for-service, salary, or other arrangement). (2) *The system whereby the patient pays for medical care.* (Individual payments for each illness or health insurance, i.e., pre-payment principle.) (3) *The organization of medical practice.* (Individual or group practice.) Consideration of these items individually will help to elucidate a situation which has long been enveloped in a smokescreen.

THE SYSTEM OF REMUNERATION OF THE DOCTOR: The traditional repugnance of the AMA hierarchy to the idea of salaried doctors is bolstered by phraseology on "individual initiative." It is contended that there is no "incentive" where doctors are paid a set salary—in utter disregard of the fact that the most notable advances in medicine have been made by medical research workers on the payrolls of the great medical schools and scientific institutions. At present private practitioners "charge what the traffic will bear"—which is difficult for the individual physician to gauge accurately. Moreover, it is estimated that about twenty percent of doctor bills are never paid. This system places a premium on exploitation of patients who do pay. It is unsatisfactory to patients and doctors alike (as physicians who have received their remuneration by other methods will often testify). Nevertheless, in deference to the traditional prejudices, the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill compromises by providing that the method of payment in each area be determined by a majority of the local practitioners.

The issue involved is frequently confused with the question of "free choice of a physician" which the AMA holds sacred. Actually, the best informed layman is scarcely in a position to assess a physician's professional qualifications, for he is necessarily influenced largely by considerations of personality and "bedside manner." Consequently patients flock to the best "salesman" or "promoter," rather than the best scientist. Moreover, "free choice" is very limited indeed in rural areas where there are few practitioners to choose from, and it is non-existent for the large segments of the population who attend free or low-cost public dispensaries. Nonetheless, the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill in no way curtails the system of "free choice." The patient is explicitly given the right to select the physician of his choice from a panel of the doctors in his area.

THE SYSTEM WHEREBY THE PATIENT PAYS FOR MEDICAL CARE: The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, which would cover some 15,000,000 people not included in the present Social Security Act, provides that each person covered is entitled to receive general medical, special medical, laboratory, and hospitalization benefits. This system of compulsory health insurance is the most essential departure of the bill. With such a pre-payment plan the costs of medical care are widely distributed and consequently diluted. The burden will not fall upon the unfortunate patient as a financial catastrophe.

Still more important, the patient is encouraged to seek medical attention at the first sign of disease rather than to procrastinate in the hope of a spontaneous cure in order to avoid paying the fee for an individual visit or call by a doctor. Under the existing system, some hypochondriacs are constant contributors to the support of prac-

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titioners whose main function is to allay neurotic anxieties. On the other hand, certain types of individuals are so stoical as to avoid consulting a doctor until advanced and often irreversible pathological processes have become established. This situation could be improved substantially by better health education coupled with the elimination of the present system of fees for every initial visit. The bill does provide that the charging of individual fees may be ordered by the Surgeon-General or the Social Security Board where patients have abused their access to medical benefits; however, there are no restrictions on obtaining expert medical care at the earliest sign of illness.

It must be clearly understood that the methods of payment by patients on the one hand, and the remuneration of physicians on the other, are two separable questions—a fact which is often beclouded in reactionary propaganda. Thus the pre-payment or insurance principle as applied to patients' payments through social security taxes is by no means incompatible with remuneration of physicians on the fee-for-service basis, the individual fees coming from the general pool of funds under any of various plans which practitioners are free to establish for their area—where they do not choose to adopt the salary principle.

The demand for a broad insurance system is reflected in the recent prodigious growth of voluntary health insurance groups, which the AMA violently opposed at first (even to the extent of violating the anti-trust laws), and then accepted belatedly after they had become firmly established. However, only a national health program such as would be instituted by S 1161 could even begin to cope effectively with the medical needs of all the people.

The stubborn position of the AMA leadership is reminiscent of the stand taken by the British Medical Association against compulsory health insurance, which was finally forced through by Lloyd George after the first World War. At present the insurance system is as thoroughly accepted by the British medical profession as is the federal operation of the Post Office in our country. In fact, the British Medical Association is among the foremost advocates of further extension of the insurance coverage. The average income of the British physician has more than doubled since the adoption of the present system. Moreover, British medicine enjoys a public confidence which has precluded the growth of quacks and the various cultists who abound in America and exploit human suffering. The AMA has properly fought against the charlatans outside the medical profession, but has neglected to attack the underlying medical-economic deficiencies that provide the soil in which quackery can flourish.

THE ORGANIZATION OF MEDICAL PRACTICE: Many advantages would result from an acceleration of the present trend toward closer association of physicians in various sorts of groups. Quite obviously the sharing of expensive equipment prevents the economic waste of unnecessary duplication. More important is the greater percentage of correct diagnoses where there is collaboration among several physicians on cases that present any diagnostic problem. This is especially true where consultation of specialists is readily available instead of representing a major transfer and an added financial burden to the patient. The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill would accelerate the centripetal tendencies in medicine, especially in areas where doctors elect a salary system of compensation.

Of special value is the interchange of current scientific information which occurs in group practice, especially where educational conferences are held frequently. At present even the most capable practitioners have great difficulty in keeping abreast of recent advances, in spite of the valuable educational programs of various professional societies (including the AMA). But vanishingly few practitioners could afford even in peace time to take off a month for post-graduate study. The Wagner bill, however, would provide financial assistance for doctors desiring additional education, as well as supplying more adequate subsidies for educational and research institutions.

In some respects the most important feature of the bill is its plan to extend preventive measures and routine examinations. The bulk of initial visits to physicians are occasioned by pain or discomfort of some sort, and these are late symptoms in many serious diseases such as cancer, tuberculosis, etc. Universal periodic routine examinations with chest X-ray plates, etc., would save many lives now lost due to the failure to apply existing medical knowledge.

Finally, the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill answers one of the traditional AMA objections to revision of the status quo—the phobia against administration by a layman. Here the administration is directed by the Surgeon-General of the US Public Health Service, which has an enviable record of medical achievement. The AMA *Journal* has responded by calling this a plan to make the Surgeon-General a "gauleiter" over the medical profession. Bizarre and terrifying visions are conjured up of political appointments of doctors, and even doctors spying on the political affiliations of patients. Such fantasies are dispelled by the realization that already more than half the hospital beds, together with their medical personnel, are supported by governmental agencies (federal, state, or local).

S 1161 has from its introduction been supported strongly by the AFL, the CIO, and the Railroad Brotherhoods. Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, applauded by labor, urged its passage not only for its social security provisions, but as a major plank in the tax program, claiming it would yield around $6,000,000,000, in the first year after enactment. Messrs. Doughton and George and majorities of the House Ways and Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee were uninterested. Before hearings are scheduled, much more pressure is going to have to be applied to the Senate committee.

Vast pressure is being marshalled against S 1161 in the form of meetings, pamphlets, and editorials in medical and lay organs in advance of the hearings on the bill before the Senate Finance Committee. An attempt is thus being made to kill the bill before it can become a public issue. This perversion of the democratic principle has been astonishing in its audacity: for example, members of the Medical Society of Christian County, Ky., resolved to "close their offices and cease to practice during the time Congress is so considering this bill."

Up to now the composition of the medical profession has been rigidly controlled by the committees on admission of the individual medical schools. The criteria of selection vary with the different schools, but in general there is overemphasis on "social" at the expense of scholastic attainment, and oftentimes flagrant anti-Semitic and anti-Negro discrimination. The cost of a medical education, with its long post-graduate training, has placed it beyond the reach of the vast masses of the nation and has tended to make the profession a conservative self-perpetuating guild. The recent growth of the progressive Association of Internes and Medical Students has been remarkable in view of the social origins of the bulk of medical students.

The Army and Navy training programs, which pay all expenses of a medical education, should afford opportunity for a more democratic method of selection of future doctors from the vast excess of applicants, with the field being opened to a wider group from the middle and working classes. The present plan is to place about three-fourths of the selections of future medical students in the hands of the Army and Navy—and it is to be hoped that their standards of evaluation will be more equitable than those of most medical schools.

Great modifications in point of view within the ranks of the medical profession are, however, a long term proposition at best. Nor may one expect any early major revisions in the attitude of the AMA leadership (which is far to the right of the conservative rank and file). The well-organized attack on the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill is doubtless an effort to anticipate the more fluid situation which will arise when the Army Medical Corps is demobilized: the period of transition to civilian life will provide the most opportune occasion for revision in methods of dispensing medical care. The propaganda against this bill, if successful, will be broadened into the general offensive against the social gains of the past eleven years. The ultimate disposition of the national health program is therefore indissolubly linked with the broader issues which will mark the 1944 election campaign.

EDWARD EARLE STARR.

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LETTER TO A CORSICAN

Recollections of the battle against fascism in Spain by a comrade in arms of one who is still carrying on that battle in the Mediterranean.

The following is an open letter to Francois Vittori, one of the leaders of the Corsican revolt which helped the Allies take the island from the Nazis last October. It is written by Theodore Balk, captain in the medical section of the "Henri Barbusse Battalion" of the Fourteenth International Brigade which fought in Spain.

WHEN the news of the uprising in Corsica reached us, my eyes scanned the papers looking for your name—the name of the only person I know on that island. It seemed so far-fetched that out of 300,000 Corsicans the one name of Francois Vittori should be singled out for mention. And yet, knowing as I did the man who bears that name, it was not so far-fetched. So although I expected one fine day to find you among the leaders of the uprising, on the morning it happened I was beside myself with joy.

The last time I heard of you was in the spring of 1941, in Marseilles. On the *Cannebiere* I bumped into one of our comrades of the Fourteenth International Brigade, the "Marseillaise." You may remember him—he was in charge of our Soldiers' Home in the Escorial. We were so glad to see one another that we sat down to have a drink—it wasn't Cassis but some watery stuff, the name of which I can't remember. Anyhow, we sat down at a sidewalk cafe and the questions began to fly. We called each other *tordus*, as we used to in Spain, and passed in review all the friends we had known there. "And Vittori?" I asked. "Vittori is in Corsica," replied our friend from the Escorial Soldiers' Home.

YES, Vittori. . . . It was a rainy October morning that you and I climbed the muddy path leading to our positions on Cuesta de la Reina near Aranjuez. That morning the Insurgents had made a surprise attack on us and dented our lines. Our reserves were preparing to counter-attack. At that precise moment you, the political commissar of the brigade, and I, its historian, went up into the front line. As we mounted the path, wounded men came toward us or were carried on stretchers. They were a mass of white—faces, uniforms, and hands were covered with a chalk-like white from the Cuesta de la Reina terrain. When we entered battalion headquarters—I think it was the "Andre Marty" Battalion—there was a strained silence. You asked about the situation. Someone described it to you. It was not the battalion commander; he was up ahead. Any dead? You were given the number and names of those killed. One name was that of your brother, Captain Vittori, in command of the Second Company. I shall never forget how you stood there before me, after the first spasms had passed across your face. You stood there, more locked up in yourself perhaps than ever, and gave the necessary commands. And then, when you had done your duty, we went looking for your dead brother.

And I remember that afternoon, the first time I ever saw you. It was in the Sierra Guadarrama, near Balsain, in a country-house where the Brigade's staff was quartered. "This is our new commissar," said our commander, Jules Dumont, introducing you. A small nose, somewhat blunted, an absent-minded expression, and rather unruly hair. When you laughed your eyes grew small and tiny crows' feet formed next to them. At that time you were thirty-five years old.

That country-house must have belonged to a paranoiac. The walls were thick as in the days of Moorish rule; and in the library I found a photograph album, expensively printed and bound, containing X-ray pictures of its owner. Skull, chest, and limbs had been taken, both from a front and side view. In that villa you told me about your life. You came from a little village in Corsica. Your father was a schoolteacher, a progressive-minded man, and you were six children in the family. From boyhood you had all been politically active, and three sons fought in Spain. You had formerly been a postal employe, in France and in Madagascar; and most recently, secretary of the French Red Aid. You had known prison, in France and Madagascar, because of your anti-fascist ideas. That was when M. Jean Chiappe was Paris Prefect of Police—Chiappe, a fellow-Corsican, but a fascist, the logical man to become Minister of the Interior in the future Vichy government. The last time we saw each other was in Aragon, in the spring of 1938. The almond-trees were sprouting their first buds and the blood of many a Frenchman was fertilizing the roots of the trees. Day after day we drew back a little, ever closer to the sea which lay at our back. Yes, those were bitter days when thanks to "non-intervention" Franco received planes, tanks, and guns, while we had to fight with our naked rifles. When the break-through at Gandesa occurred, it was our comrades from the "Marseillaise" who covered with their bodies the retreat to Tortosa and the sea. Thus they made it possible for the other brigades to set up a hastily prepared defense line. Then you took leave of the Brigade, having been named political commissar of the Forty-fifth Division, to which we belonged and which was commanded by Hans Kahle, a German anti-Nazi.

Helen West Heller

I SAW you again in Paris—but only for a few minutes—in an office near the Metro station Cadet. You were one of the secretaries of the Spanish Aid Committee. Thousands of your former comrades of the International Brigades had been tossed by the French government into the concentration camps at St. Cyprien, Argeles, and Gurs; many had been locked up in the medieval Fort Coliure. That government considered uncompromising and "premature" anti-fascism dangerous to France's peace and security. So you had your hands full trying to free your former comrades. Many of them later fell into the hands of the Nazis.

Out there in Spain we had often dreamed how we, the survivors, would return to our native lands and carry on a hand-to-hand fight against the Nazi enemies of mankind. Your dream came true. You belong to the three-man committee of the "National Front" which has liberated the first *departement* of France.

Dear Francois Vittori: I know you'd prefer to see me send greetings from the midst of my own countrymen, from a Partisan unit in Yugoslavia under Marshal Tito—there too you have many friends you knew in Spain. But it has turned out otherwise. At the moment I am in far-off Mexico; and so you must be content with a heartfelt greeting from a place that is far from the firing-line.

Salut, old friend, and *au revoir!*

THEODORE BALK.

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NM SPOTLIGHT

Garrulous Pygmies

OHIO, mother of Presidents, hasn't been bragging about it since the late Warren Gamaliel Harding. And its would-be Presidents are chips off the old dismal block. There is Governor Bricker, for example. The presidency is still only a flicker in his and Mrs. Bricker's eye, but that hasn't prevented him from displaying those solid virtues that already add up to as monumental a minus as one can find on the political scene. In his Lincoln Day philippic in Washington under the beaming auspices of the Republican members of Congress and the League of Republican Women, Bricker started by boldly attacking the NRA and when last heard from was still heading in the same direction. Among the things Bricker was against was a federal ballot for the soldiers, food subsidies to hold down living costs, federal housing, and a federal works program after the war.

As for the Lincoln Day vocalizing of the Albany sphinx, it would be an act of charity to draw over it the veil of silence. The intellectual level of Dewey's discourse was such as actually to make Bricker seem like a thinker. It is true that the ex-racket-buster was laboring under a unique handicap: making a speech on war and postwar issues without taking a stand on any of them. Fortunately there is such a word as "constitution" in the English language, and it was on this word that Dewey leaned for powerful support whenever he was in danger of encountering an idea.

It was politically fitting, of course, that the New York Copperhead should have made Lincoln's birthday the occasion for the most impassioned plea for "states' rights" since the Liberty League passed to the great beyond. As part of this he had to do a rather fancy job of historical face-lifting. Lincoln was a strict constitutionalist, according to Dewey, and the implication of his words was that the Great Emancipator conceived his mission in life to be to vindicate the constitutional doctrines of the author of the Dred Scott decision, Chief Justice Taney. It is too bad that no one had bothered to inform Dewey's ghost-writer what every schoolboy knows: that Lincoln repeatedly sacrificed the letter in order to preserve and strengthen the spirit of the Constitution, that he suspended the writ of habeas corpus in defiance of Taney, and that in freeing the slaves he made the greatest invasion of private property rights that this country has ever witnessed. By the time Dewey was through he had Lincoln wearing a mustache and running in 1864 for the office of district attorney.

All of which makes us feel that Wendell Willkie is singularly blessed in his GOP rivals. Beside the pygmy Brickers and Deweys he towers so easily that if they didn't exist, he would have to invent them. For some curious reason, however, Willkie seems bent on cutting himself down to something like their size. His speech at Twin Falls, Ida., was one of the feeblest of his career. He tried to counteract the widespread sentiment against switching horses in midstream by the silly argument that "a change of administration would be less disturbing in wartime than during the period of reconstruction." The prosecution of the war to total victory, according to Willkie, was now entirely a matter for the military commanders, and "the President cannot pit his untrained judgment against that of military leadership." One wonders who was that fellow named Wendell Willkie who not so many months ago was pitting his untrained judgment against that of military leadership and urging—rightly—"public prodding" on the second front.

But the issue is not whether a change in wartime would be less or more disturbing. The issue is, a change to what? Mr. Willkie's attempt to make it appear that though the Republican Party had some black sheep they were not quite as black as the Democratic breed, was thoroughly hollow. In the Democratic Party these elements are entrenched, Willkie argued, while in the GOP they aren't. He cited the "new" Republican leadership: the governors under whom "90,000,000 Americans now live with satisfaction" (under Bricker, Dewey, and Martin of Pennsylvania!), while "on the rostrum and on the floor of the House and Senate these Republican voices are now speaking out."

Willkie forgot to answer two simple questions. If the reactionaries are entrenched in the Democratic Party, why is it that the Democratic National Committee unanimously endorsed President Roosevelt for a fourth term? And if the progressives are dominant in the GOP, why are the leaders of the Republican National Committee fighting Willkie's candidacy? As for the Republican voices in Congress, Willkie knows that with few exceptions they are raised against votes for soldiers, against subsidies, against the fulfillment of the cooperative world perspectives of Teheran.

EVEN more demagogic was Willkie's Lincoln Day speech in Tacoma. The first half was an excellent recounting of what happened to the Democratic Party in 1864 when defeatism and treason dominated its convention, platform and presidential campaign. He also warned his own party that a similar danger threatens it today, for "Such discordant elements naturally turn to the party out of power." But Willkie then executed a remarkable non-sequitur. The chief threat to national unity, he insisted, comes not from these "discordant elements," not from those who "are anxious for peace at any price," not from "the deliberate fomenters and promoters of racial prejudice," but from the Roosevelt administration! The fact is that Willkie has here borrowed a leaf from the Copperhead Democrats of 1864, who made precisely this charge against the Lincoln administration.

On the very day that Willkie spoke the Senate Republicans made a most effective refutation of his speech when seventeen out of twenty voted to create more disunity by banning food subsidies. The impression grows that in his desire to get the Republican nomination at all costs Willkie is covering up for the GOP Copperheads, who are the principal fomenters of national and international discord.

"Rejuvenated GOP"

IF THE Republicans in Congress are any example of what Mr. Willkie was talking about when he "pointed with pride" to the party's vigor, rejuvenation is evidently a rather horrible process. On the soldiers' vote bill, House Republicans salaamed before that miserable little Jew-baiter, John E. Rankin, and the much-touted rejuvenation took on the characteristics of a lynching bee. Only the last minute rally of administration forces in the Senate restored the important sections of the Lucas-Green bill providing for a federal ballot. Having at last seized the initiative by amending the Eastland "states' rights" bill that sought to disenfranchise most of the 11,000,000 citizens in uniform, the administration majority forced the Senate to take the next step, approval of the Lucas-Green bill itself. The amended measure is now before a House-Senate conference; the hope is that the proponents of a federal ballot can whittle down the Republican-poll tax majority of fifty-eight votes in the House and hold the narrow margin of victory in the Senate. If not, the Senate's

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Lucas-Green bill can nevertheless be presented to the House. The outlook for granting the vote to the armed services has undoubtedly improved. Results, however, depend on the degree of public support mustered behind the federal ballot, without which the services are cheated of their fundamental rights of citizenship.

Mr. Willkie's "rejuvenated" party turned immediately from its attack on the franchise to defeat subsidies. Lining up almost solidly in the Senate (there were exactly three exceptions), the Republicans again embraced the poll taxers and passed the Bankhead bill outlawing subsidies. It is worth noting that the amendment which increases the retail price of milk and opens the way to the rise of other food prices was submitted by Eastland and McClellan, authors of the infamous "states rights" bill which robs the soldiers of their vote. Without question, the President will veto the Bankhead bill. It will then be imperative to get Congress to uphold the veto. Even so, the Republican-poll tax bloc has delayed the application of adequate subsidies to hold the cost of living (and especially the cost of food) in check, and has limited the administration to the insufficient subsidies now at its disposal. The need again is to exercise the most concerted pressure on Congress if the President's five-point win-the-war program is to be rescued from the wreckers.

None So Blind . . .

MULTITUDES of New York's ALP voters are painfully aware of the need to drill some elementary facts of political life into the brains of the state American Labor Party leadership. A few simple, even trite facts, like these: theirs is a key state in the '44 elections; it contains about a tenth of the nation's populace and sends more than ten percent of the country's representatives to the House. It is the home bailiwick of three leading presidential candidates—Roosevelt, Willkie, Dewey. And a Hoover Republican is at the state helm.

Clearly, considering the gravity of the time, extraordinary efforts are in order to put New York in the win-the-war lineup this November. Any political novice would agree that unity of labor, labor allied with Democrats and all patriotic groupings, is imperative. Factional strife, of any variety, plays into the opposition's hands. You would think that Dr. George S. Counts and his colleagues would see this and act accordingly. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Their performance this past fortnight was tragically revealing; bumbling on in their hoary Red-baiting jargon, they continue to reject Sidney Hillman's strenuous efforts to achieve unity for the April primaries. And it is increasingly clear that their blind obstinacy is becoming apparent to large sections of their followers.

This is evident in the episode of the thirty signatures. Aided by the venomous

Social-Democrats on the New York *Post*, and by some other papers, they presented with great fanfare a lineup of CIO leaders in opposition to Hillman's unity proposals. One might believe, from the headlines, that a yawning chasm had developed within the CIO on the unity issue. An examination of the thirty reveals something altogether different. Eighteen of the thirty are from one international, whose eight largest locals reaffirmed full support for Hillman's plan. Six others came from the Playthings and Novelty Workers; four belonged to the Brewster Local of the UAW, among them that of the shady Thomas De Lorenzo, whose administration and reelections are to be investigated by the highest body of the auto workers' union.

These leaders are rapidly isolating themselves from their followers, who cannot help but be impressed by the forthright logic of Hillman's position. They will think twice and more about the letter he sent the right-wing leaders charging that they seek to perpetuate "the present narrow state leadership of the party" by dragging the old red herring across the stage. Communism, Mr. Hillman reiterated, was a "false issue."

He had previously assured all concerned that the CIO proposals guaranteed the ALP against control or domination by any "group, clique, or caucus." He was bolstered in his contention by a group of CIO leaders who voluntarily offered to relinquish their rights as individuals "to serve on the state executive committee or in the leadership of the ALP" because the right-wing had objected to them. To no avail.

These are indubitable facts for the rank and file to consider; their conclusions will be reflected in the April primaries. The people have a way of by-passing leaders who have become obstacles to progress.

"Our Country, Our War"

THE "big" press—the regular wire services, the chain papers, and the great daily news organs—showed a startling lack of interest in the delegation of thirteen Negro editors who visited Washington for a series of conferences with government officials, and later called on President Roosevelt. With the exception of the Negro press, the *Daily Worker*, and a handful of other newspapers, the meaningful interview with the President was completely ignored. Yet the White House visit on February 5 was the first time any President has formally received representatives of the organized Negro press. The previous week a Negro correspondent, Harry McAlpin, was accredited to the White House press conference—the first Negro newsman to receive a White House press card. And of even greater significance was the publishers' statement tendered to the President and discussed by Mr. Roosevelt frankly and in detail.

The statement of the Negro Newspaper Publishers' Association requires no comment. "We are Americans!" it begins. "This is our country, to share with all other Americans. . . . This is our war. Negro Americans are fighting for the freedom of America and of all oppressed and exploited. We deplore any and all forms of disunity that threaten the winning of victory for democracy. . . . The Negro's paramount objective is to help win the war and establish a just and enduring peace under which all men may achieve human dignity and equality of opportunity."

The publishers speak for millions of Negro readers. Their pledge to the nation and the Commander-in-Chief becomes doubly weighty in the light of attempts by native fascists, Axis agents, and Radio Berlin to spread disaffection among Negro Americans, to split them away from national unity. The Axis and its American allies have failed; the race-baiters have not succeeded in isolating the Negro people, but rather have caused them increasingly to close ranks with the rest of the nation in the common cause of victory and of implementing the perspectives of Teheran.

The publishers' pledge was based on a hard-headed refusal to accept "second-class citizenship now imposed in many ways upon Negroes in America." It declared that "It is our resolve to work for the abolition of the color ban in industry"; it called for equality in all educational facilities, for equal opportunity in all local, state, national, and primary elections, for unrestricted suffrage, full civil rights, the end of racial segregation, the abolition of Jim Crow in the armed services, and for a full system of social security. Of special importance was the insistence that the Atlantic Charter be applied to all colonial and exploited peoples, not only in Europe and Asia but in Africa and among people of African descent. Finally, the statement ended with emphatic approval of "full participation by the United States in establishing and maintaining a world order in which economic equality, political self-determination, and social justice will prevail."

Beneath August Robes

THE Constitution may be what the judges say it is, but our Supreme Court justices have lately been having their difficulties in doing their saying in anything like like close harmony. This was evidenced

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during the past week in an opinion by Justice Frankfurter which charged that certain of his colleagues were "gratuitously" resorting to a "wholly novel doctrine of constitutional law"—a riposte to a similar thrust made at him several weeks ago by Justices Black and Murphy. To us it is a cause for rejoicing rather than alarm that the nine not-so-old men occasionally pull each other's hair in public, and generally remind us that they are men, not gods, and are subject to the passions and prejudices of ordinary mortals. And let us remember that this very human Supreme Court is also the most liberal in our history, thanks to the new blood that President Roosevelt has infused in it.

In the Supreme Court of today there exists no such deepseated cleavage as that which made the dissents of Holmes and Brandeis, and later of Brandeis, Cardozo, and Stone famous in other days. Yet what we are witnessing is the revival in new forms and under new conditions of the battle to shape the court to the needs of the majority of the people. The court contains two fairly well defined groups and a third that oscillates between them: the conservatives, led by Justice Frankfurter and including Chief Justice Stone and Justice Roberts; the liberals, consisting of Justices Black, Douglas, and Murphy, with Justice Rutledge tending to line up with them; and the middle-of-the-roaders, Justices Jackson and Reed.

In his constitutional and social outlook Justice Frankfurter was for years close to the Holmes-Brandeis-Cardozo school (bearing in mind, of course, that there were secondary differences among the members of this school). Holmes, Brandeis, and Cardozo were champions of "states' rights" in matters of social legislation at a time when the development of monopoly capitalism produced a trend toward the concentration of arbitrary and reactionary power in the federal government. In that context a "states' rights" approach helped advance the cause of progress. Today we have a totally different situation. The fulcrum of progress is the federal government as represented by the Roosevelt administration, and the "states' rights" slogan has become an instrument of the reactionaries.

In this light Justice Frankfurter emerges as a formalist who repeatedly sacrifices the essence of liberalism. Thus in his dissenting opinions in the two famous Jehovah Witnesses decisions of last May and June, Justice Frankfurter upheld state and local laws even where they infringed on basic constitutional rights. In the second of these dissents he went so far as to say: "It is self-delusive to believe that the liberal spirit can be enforced by judicial invalidation of illiberal legislation."

On the other hand, one cannot help noting Frankfurter's lack of formal consistency in two cases which involved a conflict between the federal government and individual rights. In one he joined with the majority in reversing the conviction of the Nazi agent, George Sylvester Viereck, though this meant stretching the Constitution a bit. In the other case he was one of the minority that approved the attempt of the Justice Department to deprive the Communist, William Schneiderman, of his citizenship, though this meant stretching the facts and narrowing the Constitution a good deal. Can it be that Justice Frankfurter and the two colleagues who joined in that dissent, Stone and Roberts, permit hoary prejudice about Communism to affect judicial objectivity?

Finnish Crisis

Soviet military operations underscored by the bombardment of Helsinki have pushed the Finnish government closer to the edge of its self-made disaster. The internal scene is one of impending storm and conflict; the rift over foreign policy is widening to the point where even the timid opposition in the Riksdag is taking on some semblance of character. But whatever the opposition, it is still feeble and unable to hurdle the cowardice characteristic of the parties within the government camp. The critics are terrified at the thought of where the government's military adventure is heading, but they are even more terrified of the wrath stirring the Finnish people against the government.

The myth of a "defensive war" has already exhausted itself; too many Finns have lost their lives fighting the Red Army in the Caucasus and in the Ukraine—hundreds of miles from Finnish territory—for the myth to perpetuate itself. And the imperialist attempt by Finland's rulers to annex territory such as Karelia and Leningrad (not to mention the often expressed desire of Finnish editorial writers for a little *lebensraum* on the Volga and in Estonia) on behalf of a "Greater Finland" cannot quite jibe with the propaganda of a "defensive war." Nor is the fable of Finnish democracy holding up before world opinion. Thousands of Finns rot in dungeons for their anti-war convictions. President Risto Ryti still exchanges cordial notes with Hitler. And, finally, Finnish treatment of Soviet war prisoners is as sadistic as that extended by the Japanese to Americans. Red Army men have been starved, beaten, and shot. Last December, the Swedish newspaper, *Folkviljan*, reported that "Russian war prisoners in Finland are used as objects for medical experiments," causing the victims terrible pain followed by death.

Mr. Hull's warning to the Finns that they get out of the war or accept the consequences is, of course, welcome. But it is a weak and pallid admonition in face of the continuing alliance between Helsinki and Berlin. It lacks the moral force which can only be provided by an outright declaration of war. Finnish circles have learned that State Department ultimatums are not to be taken too seriously, for these ultimatums have been issued several times before without decisive action to back them. In fact, these warnings have been interpreted in Helsinki as tokens of sympathy for its desperate position. In other words, Helsinki has looked to the United States to help it evade unconditional surrender to the Soviet Union and Great Britain. Our continuing neutrality, even when qualified by harsh words, is incompatible with our obligations to our leading Allies, and with our own self-interest in ending the war speedily.

This status of neutrality has also made it possible for the International Labor Office to invite Finnish representatives to the ILO conference in Philadelphia next April. No doubt the Finnish delegation will use the opportunity to explore the possibilities for a negotiated peace, and that alone is objection enough to inviting a "neutral" enemy to our shores to conspire with Herr Procope in Washington. But the blunder is equally disgusting in view of the Finnish labor leadership's criminal record. The Finnish Social-Democrats and union heads, indistinguishable in most every case, have supported the Mannerheim regime. Only recently the Finnish Federation of Trade Unions at its convention passed a resolution declaring that its "confidence in the conduct of the country's foreign policy remains unshaken" and that "to continue this war, which is so hard and painful, it is necessary to rally all our strength and courage." Naturally these trade union allies of Hitler passed over in complete silence the Nazi destruction of the trade unions in Denmark, in Norway, and other occupied countries. And yet their presence will be countenanced in Philadelphia. Whoever is behind this shady scheming should have his ears burned by the protests of American labor.

Swastika to the South

Fascist reaction in Latin America has become so serious that it represents an emergency for the entire hemisphere. Stemming from the Nazi bridgehead in Argentina, a bridgehead which has by no means been eliminated by the mere rupture of diplomatic relations with the Axis, the enemy has already seized power in Bolivia and threatens the security and democracy of several other Latin American states. Last week news arrived of arms smuggling into progressive Costa Rica as part of a plot to defy the popular will in the current elections; we also heard of a threat to the democratic government of Colombia sufficiently dangerous to cause the temporary imprisonment of the fascist leader, Laureano Gomez. It is increasingly clear that fascist forces are now attempting to extend and strengthen their centers

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of operation in preparation for a large-scale offensive at an appropriate time. The period favorable for such action would be during the early phases of the Anglo-American invasion of continental Europe, during the US presidential elections next fall, or during any other time when the United States was preoccupied. The method planned by the fascists to accomplish their evil purpose would be characteristically varied. It is probable, unless they receive a setback, that they will resort to an attempted military invasion of Brazil, in which Argentina would take leadership but expect aid from Bolivia, Paraguay, and whatever other states could meanwhile be captured by the fifth column.

It is under these circumstances that the leadership of the Confederation of Latin American Workers (CTAL) has called an emergency conference of its Executive Council in Montevideo beginning February 25. The AFL, CIO, unaffiliated Railroad Brotherhoods and Canadian trade unions have been urgently invited to send representatives. The invitation to the North American unions describes the purpose of the conference as being "to decide on necessary action concerning the serious crisis in South America." "The fascist-reactionary combination," led by Argentina, the message says, "threatens to provoke chaos and inter-American war at a time when all forces are needed to defeat Nazi Germany and Japan." The agenda will emphasize the question of Argentina and the fifth column throughout Latin America. It will hear the report of the CTAL's special representative investigating conditions in Bolivia, and it will consider the problem created by the ILO's invitation to the Finnish trade unions to attend the Philadelphia meeting in April, and its ignoring of the Soviet trade union movement. The London conference of United Nations trade unions will be on the agenda, as well as plans for various measures designed to increase labor participation in the war.

That Arabian Pipeline

SOME liberals who live in a world of fantasy ruled by leprechauns have been raising a great to-do about the government's financing of a 1200-mile pipeline for three American oil companies in Saudi Arabia. Why these liberals are waxing hot, particularly those who work for the expose-mongering *PM*, is not at all hard to understand, for quite obviously they are confusing Roosevelt with Hoover and Harding, and dollar diplomacy with Teheran policy. The facts in the case are simple: the President and his deputy for petroleum reserves, Harold Ickes, have warned time and again that our oil supplies are dwindling and that in the opinion of experts our own resources will be exhausted within the next fifteen or thirty years. So if you were Mr. Ickes and looked beyond the tip of your nose, you would shop around for ways and means of replenishing those reserves. And since the oil industry is in the hands of private owners who have very strong convictions about "free enterprise," Mr. Ickes perforce must do business with them: otherwise these private owners, whose rights are being challenged by no one with any sense of current realities anyway, would create terrific opposition against the government, thereby jeopardizing both its domestic and foreign policies. Mr. Ickes, a curmudgeon with considerable common sense, will not cut off his nose to spite his face even if *PM* insists on such surgery. He wants oil and is willing to subsidize a pipeline to get it without incidentally stirring up a tornado in and out of congress. Nor is Mr. Ickes the complete dupe *PM* makes him out to be. The contract he signed with the oil companies might have been written differently if it were transacted in *PM's* ivory tower where all politics are either black or white, good or evil and where compromise is a devilish iniquity. As it is the companies will return the government's investment within twenty-five years, oil will be sold to the government at twenty-five percent below the market price, and the government has the right to prohibit the sale of this oil if it is not in the public interest.

If negotiations of this kind had taken place under the aegis of Hoover, there would be genuine cause for anxiety. It would have meant real conflict with the British, who have large oil interests in the Middle East and who have felt that the Arab world was their special bailiwick. Such sources of conflict exist and the coalition is not served by denying them. But quite different from the Hoover or Harding or Coolidge techniques, the Roosevelt approach

Their Daily Bread

THE Free Germany Committee's newspaper, *Freies Deutschland*, published weekly in Moscow, recently carried a survey of the inner scene in Hitler's Germany. Here is a slightly abridged version of one article written by a non-commissioned officer taken prisoner at Stalingrad.

"The decay of a nation which precedes its downfall is for a long time hidden from the eyes of the observer. The external features of every-day life are slow to change. But under the seemingly unchanged surface the decay progresses.

"The following pieces of news from inside Germany are all authentic. They come from Germans in Germany and are found in letters to German soldiers and officers.

"Shoe laces are rationed. You can hardly get a pair. You can't get more than three cigarettes a day. The ersatz honey makes your stomach ache. One mother says that it is worse than the artificial honey they had in 1917. Frau Stendal needed a cup of honey. But it can only be obtained by those who have ration cards marked for 'bomb damaged citizens.' Yet others who have good Nazi party connections get everything, even bacon, eggs, sugar, and coffee.

"Padlocks are worth their weight in gold, but they do not help. The ducks Frau Fischer had raised with so much care were gone after she came from work one day. And Frau Krantz—she raised three rabbits for her son's wedding dinner which would take place when he got leave from the front. The son was killed at Stalingrad. She just got the news. And somebody stole the rabbits on top of that. And now the authorities are demanding the three rabbit skins, for they have been registered.

"On the *Hallerwiese* near Nurenberg, a thirteen-year-old boy stabbed his brother to death for a piece of bread. In Breslau there were nine murders within a few days. Frau Rosen refused to give a soldier on leave two pieces of soap her son had sent for his girl; the soldier beat her up and she died in the hospital.

"In Schoenwalde, three women were imprisoned because they spoke to Serbian prisoners. In Kempten, Fraulein Rosa Schmitz was tried as a 'traitor' because of her friendship with a Pole. The mayor, who had been courting Rosa, denounced her. But Fraulein Rosa had a friend high up in the Elite Guard. So the trial was adjourned and now an investigation is being made to find out if the Pole is not a *Volksdeutscher* (of German blood).

"These are trifles reported by eye witnesses. But every trifle represents a thousand others. And for millions of people life consists of just such trifles: shortages, hunger, black markets, uncertain streets at night, murder for a piece of bread, prison for a word with a Pole.

"The emaciated body of the nation is covered with ulcers. Can it be healed again? Yes—in the great fever of a liberation struggle can a nation recover and change."

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is to talk such matters over without the marines being diverted to impose American will. These discussions of differences are in keeping with the spirit of Teheran, and Undersecretary of State Stettinius' announcement that such discussions with the British will begin at an early date is proof of how wrong *PM* is. Teheran is changing the perspectives of international business transactions and anyone who persists in making mechanical comparisons with the past commits a serious blunder.

LABOR ABROAD by MARTIN T. BROWN

WOE IS WOLL

NATIONAL trade union federations in all parts of the world have in recent weeks written Sir Walter Citrine, general secretary of the British Trades Union Congress, accepting the TUC's invitation to send delegates to the world labor conference, opening in London June 5. The invitations to the CIO, the Confederation of Latin American Workers (CTAL) and its sixteen affiliates, and the All-India Trades Union Congress (AITUC), and their acceptances, are particularly significant. In the case of the CTAL, it marks the first sign of official recognition by the TUC of the constructive part the CTAL is playing in the war. For the CTAL it means fulfillment of its cherished hope for such an international conference. It accepted with "special thanks" and "genuine eagerness" and praised "the sincerity and high purposes motivating British labor."

The acceptance by the AITUC's general council last week indicates not only the all-inclusiveness of the London conference, but also guarantees representation from one of the most important colonial trade union movements. In terms of the immediate war situation in the east, it can help strengthen the fight of the Indian people against Japan, a fight aided in large measure by the AITUC. Aid to the liberation movement of India by labor throughout the world can be one of the expected accomplishments of the conference.

IN ACCEPTING British labor's invitation, the AITUC's general council pointed out that "non-participation would mean leaving the viewpoint of Indian workers to be misrepresented by the reactionary and government-sponsored Indian Federation of Labor." But more significant was the council's statement that "it now remains for the government of India to grant passport and travel facilities to London."

Acceptance of the invitation by the CIO came within two weeks of Matthew Woll's blast at the forthcoming conference as "another attempt to smuggle Communists into an international meeting through the cellar door." Woll, who occupies the post of AFL vice-president and chairman of its postwar reconstruction committee, repeated his previous statements that the AFL could not participate with Soviet trade unions because they "are not trade unions in the sense that American workers understand the term." He went on to say that "the fundamental differences" between the AFL and "government-controlled Russian labor are so glaring that cooperation between the two is impossible."

Perhaps the more accurate way of putting the relationship between Soviet trade unions and their government would be "labor-controlled government." But it is not my purpose here to defend the Soviet trade unions. They need no defense. They stand comfortably on their record of achievements both before and during the present war.

IN ADDITION to Woll's stated objection to the conference, one further point must be made. Woll and other reactionaries in the AFL don't like the idea of the CIO being invited to the London meeting. In all their past relations with British labor they have gone so far as to deny the very existence of the CIO, claiming for the AFL the exclusive right to represent American labor in all international labor assemblies. Until now the TUC has, by and large, nurtured this illusion. But by its invitation to the CIO it has finally ended its own reluctance to deal with an equally powerful section of American labor. Further, it has opened a wedge for future collaboration with the CIO which will force the AFL's leadership either to revise its attitude toward the CIO or be left out in the cold so far as world labor is concerned.

Some AFL leaders apparently now feel that they are in a difficult position. In an article on world labor cooperation, Daniel J. Tobin, president of the AFL Teamsters Union, suggests that President Roosevelt appoint an American labor leader to visit the Soviet Union to investigate its labor movement, to see how it functions and what its relations are with the Soviet government. Whether Tobin is trying thereby to get the AFL out of its difficulties resulting from a self-imposed isolation is not clear at this writing. But it is clear that the AFL is beginning to feel the effects of this isolation from world labor.

British labor was quick to react to Woll's charges. Reports from London received by *Allied Labor News* show the unanimity of labor and public opinion there in condemning the AFL refusal to participate. The London *Daily Herald*, official TUC newspaper, declared editorially: "The decision of the AFL not to attend the London conference . . . will cause deep disappointment here." It then quoted Citrine as follows: "Unless the international trade union movement can show itself capable of rising above its internecine difficulties, how can agreements be expected from government?"

After terming Woll's charges "too ridiculous for words," Ebby Edwards, TUC chairman, said: "The AFL has the same opportunity to place questions on the agenda as the Russians." Will Lawther, president of the 700,000-strong Miners Federation of Great Britain, commented: "Those who know the reactionary nature of AFL leaders will not be astonished." W. Boyle, president of the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen, said: "Woll's statement, which amounts to an insult to our great ally, is at strange variance with the United Nations unity declared at Teheran. I am confident that Woll's views are not shared by the rank and file of the AFL."

Reynolds News, organ of eight million members of cooperatives, answered Woll's charges that Soviet labor is not "free" in the following words: "In a socialist economy where the main task of the unions is no longer to defend wages from the clutches of profit, it is bound to differ from western standards. What is unalterable is the common interest of working people the world over, whether their skins are white, black, or yellow. Their voices can be heard only through worldwide unity of their great trade union, cooperative and political movements."

The Manchester *Guardian*, one of Britain's most influential newspapers, had the following to say in an editorial entitled "Moscow Bogey": "The AFL is all in favor of recognizing the Russians by fighting on the same side and by permitting Roosevelt and Hull to meet with them. But it's not in favor of allowing Green and Woll and other AFL leaders to sit in the same room with them. Senator Wheeler and Nye always tremble when an American gets

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near an Englishman, for fear maybe of being 'outsmarted.' Green and Woll feel the same way about the Russians. On this question the AFL does not speak for American workers."

IN PREPARATION for the coming Allied invasion of western Europe, the National Council of Engineering and Allied Trades Shops Stewards of Great Britain has called a nationwide production conference for March 12 with the purpose of guaranteeing maximum production in all key war industries. More than 2,000 delegates, representing over a million workers in factories and shipyards, are expected to attend this meeting, largest of its kind in Britain during the war. The shop steward's council, originally formed in 1935 for the aircraft industry, now embraces stewards' committees in over 1,000 principal war industries.

The conference's purpose is "to keep up maximum production under all circumstances," and to "demonstrate to the men in the armed forces that their comrades in the factories will meet all the needs of the fighting fronts." Taking its cue from the Teheran meeting, the national council said: "Perspectives have opened up for gaining a decisive victory this year, paving the way for social advances by democratic forces the world over. We recognize the immensity of the task of carrying out the Teheran decisions. Terrific battles, involving heavy loss of life and materials, will be needed on the various fronts. Britain will be a supply base in the immediate rear of the front line. We must face the possibility of conditions similar to those of Stalingrad, where production had to be maintained under all circumstances and difficulties. We must achieve the speediest possible replacement of materials, thus reducing loss of life."

RUBBER production in Colombia is being held up because of a lack of medical facilities and discrimination in wages between white and Indian workers, according to a report from that country to *Allied Labor News*. Colombian rubber is not a product of cultivated plantations as in Sumatra, Borneo, and Java, but grows wild in the country's almost inaccessible Amazon jungles, which teem with malaria and other tropical diseases.

One of the principal difficulties in obtaining rubber in large quantities until now has been an almost complete lack of communications between the jungle and the rest of the country. In order to overcome this obstacle the Rubber Development Corporation, an American organization, and the Colombian government worked out plans to build a 250-mile roadway through the jungle, on which more than 1,000 laborers are now employed.

Insufficient medical treatment against malaria and other tropical diseases, however, has taken a serious toll of workers and cut down the existing labor supply. In addition, hundreds of workers enlisted by contractors for the RDC have often tried to leave because of these conditions. The contractors, who have set up zones of influence in the area to embrace the local Indian population, have also divided workers into two groups: white and Indian. While whites are paid two dollars and fifty cents a day, Indians receive only thirty cents for the same work. With the work lasting only five months of the year—from October to March—because torrential rains prevent construction in the remaining months, the average Indian does not earn more than forty to fifty dollars and must seek other means of earning his livelihood. The contractors run local stores and in many cases the Indian laborer is forced to pay in work instead of in money. This leads, quite obviously, to a form of peonage or slavery.

The situation has been cleared up to some extent in recent weeks through the incessant pressure of Colombian labor and the joint action of the Colombian government and the RDC. But until more definite action is taken against discrimination in wages and by providing far greater protection against disease, this source of rubber will be severely limited for some time.

THE Chilean people have vigorously reacted to demands by conservatives that the Confederation of Chilean Workers be suppressed because of its active participation in politics. In its reply, *La Hora*, official newspaper of President Juan Antonio Rios' Radical Party, stressed the importance of labor's political activity as follows: "Nothing has harmed the working class of some countries more than 'syndicalist' isolation, indifference in the face of the political process and belligerency toward all governments. International experience teaches us that no social progress is attainable unless the government is a popular one and can rely upon the support of the workers."

FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

THE current issue of *Science and Society* contains an extremely interesting and well-rounded article under the title of "War and Politics," by W. T. Parry. After discussing the essence of war (according to Clausewitz) and the *political objective*, which in many cases is one, both in peace and war, the author writes: "But war has its qualitative difference from peace. We must therefore go on to consider the specifically *military* objective. The military objective or immediate objective is if possible to disarm or overthrow the enemy, 'to conquer and destroy the armed power of the enemy' for only thus can we ensure his submission. 'To accomplish [this] purpose, we should always direct our *principal* operation against the *main body* of the enemy army or at least against an important portion of his forces.' A *secondary* military objective is 'to take possession of his material and other sources of strength.' 'In order to seize the enemy's material forces we should direct our operations against the places where most of his resources are concentrated. . . . The enemy country must be conquered, for out of this country, if unconquered, a new military force may be formed. . . .' These military objectives must be accomplished to attain the political objective, to subdue the enemy's will, or to 'gain public opinion,' as Clausewitz puts it. 'Public opinion is won through great victories and the occupation of the enemy's capital.' (Quotations from Clausewitz.)

"Neglect of military principles embodying the essence of war is curiously frequent and is often attended by important consequences. An American writer gives the following example of violation of the principle of the objective (in the military sense 'the principal armed forces of the enemy'). 'The British violated the principle of the objective in the American Revolution. They should have concentrated their efforts on crushing the main American army under Washington. Instead they scattered their energy in seizing seaports and trying to occupy territory. Washington's army, foolishly spared, led finally to their defeat.'"

In this connection it is interesting to note the following passage from "General Hawkins' Notes" in the current issue of the *Cavalry Journal*: ". . . In the campaign that was enacted in and about what are now the cities of Brooklyn and New York during the months of August, September and October, 1766—and particularly during the days of August 26-29 when the Battle of Long Island was fought—Wash-

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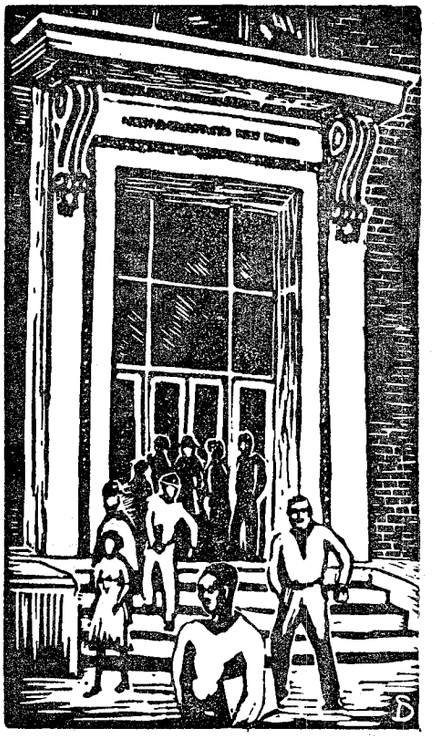
ington displayed such errors of judgment that he involved his army in almost certain disaster and disgrace, and the American cause, from every reasonable standpoint, should then and there have perished. But luck intervened. Washington and the patriot army were *saved by the extraordinary procrastination, hesitation and incompetence of the British army and navy leaders.*" (Emphasis mine—Col. T.). Thus we have an example of failure by the British to follow the principle of the main objective during the Revolutionary War. It may be said without the shadow of hesitation that the western Allies are violating this principle in Italy right now, and have been violating it for more than a year by their failure to "direct their principal operation against the main body of the enemy army, or armed forces."

When Col. Kernan's first book, *Defense Will Not Win The War*, came out two years ago, many well intentioned people seized upon it as a revelation. In company with several other reviewers we greeted the book warmly, but could not agree with the Colonel's idea that Italy was the place for the main Allied blow, or, as he put it, was the "chink in the Axis armor." Italy is nothing but a vermiform appendix on the body of Europe. Its shape and terrain are such that no sizable operation—according to modern standards and scales—can be conducted there. Italy does not include any important military objectives. Italy does not and cannot contain any important enemy forces, much as Mr. Hanson W. Baldwin, the military expert of the New York *Times*, tries to present it as something really big. It is and can be only a military side-show, a diversion at best. But even a diversion can be a diversion only when the main show is taking place somewhere else. Thus, under the present conditions, the Italian campaign is nothing but a "substitute for an abstitute" as the Cockney story goes.

Of course, should the Balkans be considered the direction of the main blow (which to us is a moot question, very moot indeed), then it may be said that Italy provides a flank position, from which a squeeze play against the Balkans can be made in conjunction with the Soviet armies of the southern front. In any case the south of Italy, which we conquered four months ago, is entirely sufficient for this purpose and it might have been a good thing, as we pointed out repeatedly, to hold a line northwest of Foggia and Naples and to let the Germans do the bloody mountain-climbing such as we are doing now at Cassino. Our possession of Italy up to the bottom of the "calf" would have been quite sufficient to insure our mastery of the Mediterranean sea lanes, to give us the necessary air bases for attacks on southern Europe, and to provide us with ports of embarkation for an expedition into Yugoslavia, Albania or northern Greece.

Instead of that we went climbing up the



Stanley DeGraaf

steep and ragged ladder, toward Rome. And, while on this subject, I wish to point out again that the very fact that Rome is our objective creates a ticklish situation for us: *we* are the ones who are being placed in the uncomfortable position of having to shell and bomb Rome, while the Germans take cover in it. Such a situation has already arisen in miniature on Mt. Cassino, where *the Germans sit in the famous Benedictine monastery, while the Vatican asks us not to fire on the monastery.*

I think that I have established our contention that Italy was no place to go, at least not beyond Foggia-Naples line. It is also perfectly clear that despite the ranting and puffing of Mr. Baldwin, it is clear to all that the Italian theater of war contains an infinitesimal part of the armed forces of the enemy. To say that it contains (including the north) five percent of these forces would be exceedingly charitable.

But, seeing that the decision was made to go and fight a laborious campaign in an "alley," against a small fraction of the enemy forces, let us see whether the best has been made of a faulty situation. Let us turn to an article by the eminent military reviewer, Max Werner, in New York's *PM* for February 13. Mr. Werner says: "This week's combination of victory in Russia and stalemate in Italy demonstrates that no offensive against the Wehrmacht can be successful unless it uses the tactics tested in Russia. . . . The pattern of Russian victories is: simultaneous offensive waged in many directions with major forces. The Russian blows fall from Narva to Nikopol. . . . But the situation in Italy developed quite differently. The pressure was exerted with limited forces. The landing below Rome was a limited operation. It was not an independent offensive aimed at the liberation of Rome, but rather a thrust from the coast directed against the communications of the German front at Cassino. . . ."

The landing, tactically tied up with the "main front," naturally permitted the Germans to operate on a short interior line and to shift their reserves back and forth. The landing was thus what may be called "unimaginative," or "pedestrian." Enemy reserves were *not split.* Having taken the enemy utterly by surprise (which, by the way, proves that his "impregnable shore wall" is nothing but a myth), we failed to take advantage of the surprise by thrusting boldly across his two main arteries—the Via Appia and the Via Casilina. Right from the start we thought of "consolidating" instead of "expanding" our beach-head. An offensive operation was conducted in a defensive spirit.

Tactically speaking, our operations suffered from two defects: poor reconnaissance and very primitive cooperation of the various arms, especially infantry and armor. For example, we did not know what was going on in Cassino when we blandly walked into that town for the first time and had to get out, pronto. We did not know that our air blows had not knocked out the Rome railroad junction. As to cooperation, we simply advise the reader to glance at an editorial to that effect in the semi-official *Armored News*. It is outspoken enough and concludes thus: "Unfortunately too few people realize or express the necessity for combining all arms and waging one war. . . . If there was ever a game in which team play counted, this is it."

Thus it seems pretty clear that in the realms of strategy, operations, tactics, coordination of weapons and reconnaissance we can learn plenty, and instead of patting ourselves on the back, turn our eyes eastward and learn from an army which is doing most of the fighting, practically alone, against the main forces of the main enemy, and doing all that successfully.

Our main operations must perforce take place across the Channel, and many people will say: we can't learn anything from the Russians in that respect. This is not correct. Take the landing operation in the port of Novorossisk and you will see that there is plenty to learn from it. Take the Oranienbaum beach-head established two years ago. Take the operations connected with the crossing of the Dnieper, as well as the landings in the Far North. *There is a lot to learn in them thar steppes.* After all, the Germans did not let go of every single prize they got in Russia just because they are afraid of an Allied invasion in the West. They let go because they are being beaten. Beaten by strategy, operations, tactics, coordination, reconnaissance, warfare in depth and superior morale. Beaten where they are the strongest, by far. So why don't we at last get out our copy-books?

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READERS' FORUM

Dialectics and Science

To New Masses: I enjoyed William Rudd's excellent paper, "Planned Science, Free Scientists," in your recent issue. But I cannot agree with this statement: "Indeed it may be argued that the proper time to learn dialectical materialism is when one is well into the practical side of what it is the philosophy of." Scientists are not the only proper students of dialectics, and that statement seems to me to put the whole matter of the study of dialectics the other way about.

The proper approach to science is through an understanding of dialectics. For lack of that understanding the minds of most of our scientists are not wholly scientific. Outside their own special fields they think with all the muddlemindedness of laymen. To the consideration of problems outside their special fields they do not bring inquisitive, open, unprejudiced minds, willing to be instructed, as dialectics requires, and as science should require, them to do. If they did, they would promptly become Communists. They cannot do so because they have not mastered dialectics, whereby alone a man may become scientific in all his essential thinking.

As I understand it, dialectics is both a philosophy and a logic. As a philosophy dialectics affirms that the universe is a congruent whole composed of matter in motion. Every particle of matter is related to and interacts with every other particle. The whole is governed by the laws that govern matter in motion. Hence, there is nothing unknowable, only things unknown. As a philosophy dialectics denies the existence of the supernatural. Thus it orients man to his universe. From that orientation it follows that the whole duty of man is to be as healthy and happy and useful as he can here on this earth.

Aristotle did not invent logic. He merely formulated certain principles which we unconsciously use in certain phases of our thinking. By formulating these principles he enabled us to study them and use them consciously and more effectively.

Nor did Marx and Engels invent dialectics. They also merely formulated certain other principles which govern other phases of our thinking and thereby enabled us to use them more effectively. Aristotle's logic is of little help in the selection of premises. Dialectical logic might be called the logic of the selection of correct premises. Somebody has said that we all use logic in our thinking, else we could not think at all. That might also be said of dialectics.

For instance, when a legislature passes a law for the protection of wild ducks, the legislators consider the past, present, and future of the ducks, their habits in breeding, feeding, and migrating, their relationships to man and other animals. In selecting their premises the legislators think dialectically. In formulating their conclusions in the law the legislators think logically.

To the extent that the legislators' employment of dialectics and logic is sound, the law is aptly designed.

Dialectics is designed to help us to understand the dialectics of nature, by which is meant something different from either a philosophy or a mode of thought, but something which we must understand if we are to master the forces of nature. For that reason dialectics should be studied by all persons who propose to become scientists.

The best summary of dialectics which I have ever found is contained in *The History of the Communist Party of the USSR* and is attributed to Stalin.

Lewiston, Idaho. Eugene A. Cox.

Idealists and the War

To New Masses: The Browder-Meiklejohn controversy and some of the letters of comment raise in my mind questions of background philosophy that if not dealt with more adequately will furnish a perpetual stumbling block in the struggle against fascism. It should be fairly evident that Mr. Browder is really disagreeing with Dr. Meiklejohn not on an adjustable secondary point, but on a diametrically opposed major premise. Mr. Browder seems to be obliquely aware of this situation when he states that "perhaps we do not know yet who is really for and who is against the complete destruction of fascism-Nazism." So far, one is forced to conclude that a large group of the liberals can cooperate with the Communists only so long as they *mis*understand each other.

This issue of free speech for fascists is merely one point of divergence in the opposition of entire philosophies. (Incidentally, where does free speech stop? Speech is an action which disseminates ideas; ideas engender more action. Is free speech without free action a fraud? Dr. Meiklejohn's adherents no doubt feel they uphold the true ideal of democracy and sniff on Mr. Browder the taint of a semi-despot, or at least of a tricky sort of democrat. But the real difference is that they are philosophic idealists, whereas Mr. Browder and his adherents are philosophic materialists.

Modern history has provided a demonstration of each. The Russians approached democracy through materialism as expressed by the Bolsheviks; the Germans through idealism as expressed by the Social Democrats of the Weimar Republic. The Weimar concept was grounded in abstract principles, *a priori* in time and universally valid. The political theoreticians did not reckon with the objective dynamism of the social order. Democracy, to be self-consistent as an idea, had to grant the same rights to anti-democrats as to democrats. It is an absolute which cannot be made concrete without losing its character. Under this shield of abstract state theory Hitler built his anti-democratic forces. When he attained power he destroyed democracy. The practical result was fascism.

On the other hand, to the Bolsheviks there was no question of self-consistent ideas. Lenin rejected the logician's problem of whether or not one should offer democratic rights to the opponents of it. As materialists the theoreticians saw themselves as partisans of a political ideal at a given moment of social conflict when institutions and masses of people were in motion and change. They "undemocratically" liquidated the political power of the anti-democrats, denying their partisan democracy to the partisans of autocracy. The practical result was the growth of democracy.

The point here is not to shape ironic paradoxes but to clarify through historic example what the positions are on this issue of democracy for fascists and what they mean for cooperation against Nazism.

Mr. Browder, for instance, asks for cooperation to destroy every vestige of fascism: Dr. Meiklejohn would probably ask cooperation *not* to destroy every vestige. Thus certainly, as Mr. Browder puts it, "The whole issue becomes one of mistaken identity." The liberal idealist at this point aids the fascist against democracy, against the Communists. He also aids the Communist when the last vestige of Communism is being menaced. So he becomes an unpredictable fellow, whacking now at one and now at another in his need to preserve pure a proposition in logic against the pressure of material forces.

Dr. Meiklejohn and Mr. Browder became more definitely antagonistic as they came to understand where the other stood. That is to be expected if I have read their position correctly. And from the New Masses' point of view doesn't the essence of the problem become, how to find out with whom the Communists can cooperate? The controversy seems a good start.

Peter Owens.

San Francisco.

Remember!

Morris U. Schappes has been behind bars now for nine weeks. Have you written to Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, at Albany, yet? If not, we urge you to do so immediately. His freedom depends on what you do.—The Editors.

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POET AND HUMANITARIAN

Col. Charles Erskine Scott Wood remained the "artist of life" in nearly a century devoted to the "fight for better things." By Ella Winter.

On January 23 Col. Charles Erskine Scott Wood died at the age of ninety-two at his home in Los Gatos, Cal. Colonel Wood's best known work, "Heavenly Discourse," has been distributed in many thousands of copies throughout the English-speaking world. In the thirtieth anniversary issue of NEW MASSES *(Feb. 18, 1941), Colonel Wood told how the first few satires of "Heavenly Discourse" had been published in the old Masses and how some years later it was* NEW MASSES *which sponsored the publication of the book by the Vanguard Press.—The Editors.*

ERSKINE—"old Erskine"—the first picture that flashes to mind is of that careless black flowing tie, the bow tie he always wore, and that careless white flowing beard, and his waving hair—and his bountiful generousness. He couldn't give enough, Erskine Scott Wood. He never seemed to want anything of anyone—only to give, only to help you bring out what was in you, to make you feel how much you counted. He made everyone feel they had something important, unique, to contribute.

He would meet a small boy, and as quick as you could say "Sitting Bull," Erskine would be telling the child Indian stories, those wonderful myths he afterwards collected in *A Book of Indian Tales*. Wood knew the Indians well: he had been sent from West Point, whence he graduated in 1874, to fight the native tribes. But, instead, and characteristically, he found out that this was a great people, simple and straightforward. He stayed among them as a friend, and brought his little son for Chief Joseph to help bring up.

His fighting career (in the military sense) over, Colonel Wood settled in Portland, Oregon, as a lawyer and followed that profession for years. Though very successful, he never lost his humanitarian outlook, his interest in the wider social frame-work. From his friends John Reed, Louise Bryant, and Francis J. Heney, Wood learned much. He got to know the inside story of that raucous, pioneering life of the early West—and it did not teach him respect for the respectable people. Much of what he learned in those days went into the biting satires, the witty but merciless exposures of hypocrisy that he put into fable form in *Heavenly Discourse*, his best-known work, and the later *Earthly Discourse*. Wood saw these events in their proper setting; he was too much the artist to put people in over-simplified categories, "good" and "bad." He saw what made good people act wrong from a social point of view, and therefore, what must be changed. Erskine Wood never lost that vision: it is in all his writings, explicit in the satires, implicit in the poems and plays. This clear realization of American conditions was what made Wood recognize the Soviet Union's triumph earlier than most people did. He realized what doors opened when privilege and hypocrisy were removed from a society.

FIRST and foremost Wood was and remained the artist of life, the lover of beauty. I think he was a "reformer"—though a humorous and poetic one—chiefly because of his thoroughgoing conviction that life must be beautiful, for everyone. A painter himself (he painted all his life), he admired artists, writers, sculptors, poets, masters of handwork; bought their work, encouraged them in every way possible. He supported the arts all his life, as few people do, never flagging in his patience, never with a thought of what was the "fashionable thing." Wood was a one-man rebellion against that too-frequent attitude of alternate cozening and neglect of the artist. At "The Cats," that beautiful stone house Erskine built in Los Gatos, Cal., in the midst of the redwood and manzanita trees, the arts were as comfortable as guests were at ease.

The house was a thing of beauty. Lincoln Steffens wrote of it, after one of our visits: "When we drove home from *The Cats* Monday, I felt that I had been in a place of beauty. . . . You have a rare triumph in your continuous creation of *The Cats*, for it expresses you and Sara more completely than anything you two have ever written."

Vigorous as was the poetry Wood wrote—"King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid," "The Poet in the Desert," the play *Circe*, "O Alabam'," the poem he wrote at white heat on the Scottsboro case—nothing he wrote could give quite the sense of elation you got from his presence. Faces lighted up, parties were given spirit when Erskine Wood joined them.

I had met the Woods in Italy—symbolic place to meet two people whose mission in life is to spread beauty. We had wandered through the picture galleries and palaces of Florence; driven to Fiesole in open carriages, strolled along the Arno.

The Woods went back to California, and in a year or two Steffens and I followed. They were Steffens' oldest and dearest California friends, and in the ensuing years we saw much of them. There was that picnic when we first went to Carmel, the picnic with Robinson Jeffers and his wife which was to introduce the newly-arrived Steffens' to the poet's family. Erskine organized it; everybody had a wonderful time—even those who usually hated picnics. Erskine lay full length under a cypress tree, telling the Jeffers' twelve-year-old twins stories, twitting the three-year-old Pete on his precious shells, discussing the tree rust on the cypress with Sara Bard Field's daughter.

So many times we spent such days. And always Erskine's talk, his being, illuminated everything. Once, I remember, the conversation drifted to Arab horses. He knew everything about Arab horses—everything there was to know. But Erskine knew about human beings too—their need for freedom, their deep-rooted desire to feel they were functioning. These concepts were as concrete as bread to Erskine Wood, he desired them as passionately as might an underground worker in today's occupied Europe. One might complain that Wood was almost too impatient for the day when humanity would be without fetters of any kind; he abhorred the necessities of the interim period, of planning and preparation, and derided them in one of his later books, *Too Much Government*. He was an anarchist in the most spiritual sense of that word.

AS MY mind wanders over the twenty years I knew Erskine Wood, the myriad memories, I seem to remember constantly things made more exciting, more rich and meaningful because Erskine and Sara were in on them. . . . One writes naturally "Erskine and Sara," because those two were always together: Erskine Scott Wood loved his wife with a deep and inclusive and lasting love. "The Cats" was really a tribute to her and their life together: a palace and a memento in stone; a symbol that would last. At the entrance to the drive stand the huge marble cats, sardonic, dignified, aloof: inside them, for future ages, is a description of our epoch Erskine has written.

I suppose few people can have loved everything about life more than the great-hearted Colonel did: food and wine; friendship; thought and discussion, literature, people, poetry, children, art and artists, sun and rain, creation, and the mud and grime and glory of the fight for better things. One thinks of him there, on Olympus (where he always belonged), smiling, and writing a little satire.

ELLA WINTER.

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BIRTHDAY PROGRAM

Some time-capsules from Washington's era would make good reading for Congress today. A tip for Rankin, Taft, Byrd, et al.

I DON'T know how our patriotic Congress plans to celebrate Washington's Birthday this year of decision. I have heard the interesting suggestion that adjournment—a tribute of beautiful silence—would be most fitting. But this seems too negative for a Congress that, on every other occasion, has risen fearlessly above precedent and principle.

I propose that Congress, after a little research, go on the air with a public reading of time-capsules from Washington's era. Only those who, by their record, show unmistakable loyalty to the spirit of Washington should be permitted to read the entombed memorials of our first Commander-in-Chief and President.

I suggest this tentative program:

WASHINGTON AND THE JEWS: John Rankin, who has been so alert to the intrusion of Jewish names in our army's casualty lists, should remind Congress that Hitler is right when he says that Jews and revolution are inseparable. Two Jewish officers served on Washington's staff during the American Revolution: Colonel Isaac Franks and Major Benjamin Nones. Owing to the regrettable absence of medical school quotas, one of the surgeons at Valley Forge was Philip Moses Russel, whom the General commended "for his assiduous and faithful attention to the sick and wounded." All Jews are "free-thinkers": Hezekiah Levy was a member of Washington's own Fredericksburg Lodge of Masons No. 4. All Jews are "international bankers": when Congress sent money to Washington to maintain the siege of Boston early in '76, John Hancock, president of Congress, entrusted the transportation of $250,000 to three "gentlemen of character whom I am confident will meet your notice," one of whom was Moses Franks of Philadelphia.

Rankin will know how to use his own discretion about certain other items in this time-capsule. For example, there are Washington's three letters to the Hebrew Congregations of New York, Philadelphia, Savannah, Charleston, and other cities. Jacob Cohen, of the Beth Elohim congregation of Charleston, had written the President in 1790: "Various, extensive, and invaluable are the benefits which your fellow-citizens have derived from the glorious revolution which, under Providence, you have been the principal instrument in effecting. To them it has secured the natural and inalienable rights of human nature—all the requisite privileges and immunities of freedom, and has placed within their reach peace, plenty, and the other blessings of good government. To the equal participation and enjoyment of all these, it has raised us from the state of political degradation and grievous oppression to which partial, narrow, and illiberal policy and intolerant bigotry has reduced us in almost every other part of the world. Peculiar and extraordinary reason have we, therefore, to be attached to the free and generous Constitution of our respective States, and to be indebted to you, whose heroic deeds have contributed so much to their preservation and establishment. . . ." Jacob Cohen of Charleston added: ". . . we, and our pos-

"The Reader," by Max Weber

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terity, will not cease to chronicle and commemorate you, with Moses, Joshua, Othniel, Gideon, Samuel, David, Maccabeus, and other holy men of old, who were raised up by God, for the deliverance of our nation, His people, from their oppression." To the Hebrew congregations of four cities, Washington replied: "The affection of such a people is a treasure beyond the reach of calculation, and the repeated proofs which my fellow citizens have given of their attachment to me and approbation of my doings form the purest source of my temporal felicity."

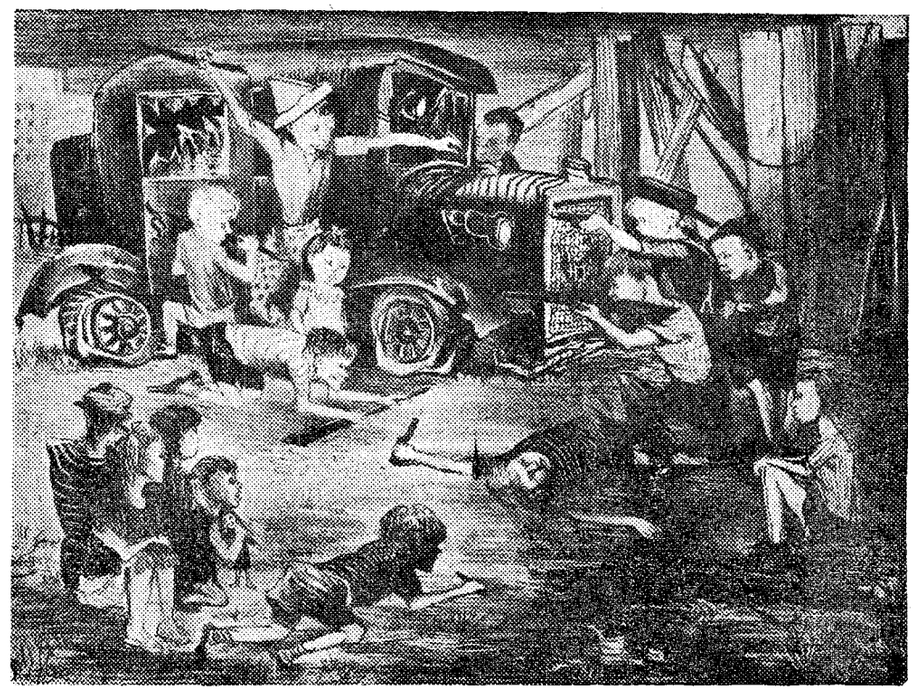
Washington wrote the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, that "It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily, the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support."

Levi Sheftel, president of the Savannah, Ga., Congregation, wrote the newly-elected President: "Your unexampled liberality and extensive philanthropy have dispelled that cloud of bigotry and superstition which has long as a vail shaded religion—unrivetted the fetters of enthusiasm—enfranchised us with all the privileges and immunities of free citizens, and initiated us into the grand mass of legislative mechanism. By example you have taught us to endure the ravages of war with manly fortitude, and to enjoy the blessings of peace with reverence to the Deity and benignity and love to our fellow creatures." The President replied: "May the same wonder-working Deity, who long since delivered the Hebrews from their Egyptian oppressors, planted them in a promised land, whose providential agency has lately been conspicuous in establishing these United States as an independent nation, still continue to water them with the dews of heaven and make the inhabitants of every denomination participate in the temporal and spiritual blessings of that people whose God is Jehovah."

WASHINGTON AND TORIES: This time-capsule should be read by Senator Byrd to prove that there is nothing new under the sun. Jonathan Odell, leading Tory satirist, prayed for "Some ars'nic verse, to poison with the pen" the Commander-in-Chief who relied on the plain people for his support ("From the backwoods half savages came down"). Himself an organ of communication between Benedict Arnold and Major Andre, Odell attacked Washington as "Patron of villainy, and villainous chief" in his *The American Times* (1780). If the name of Washington is tactfully blurred, some listeners in Congress will know what name to substitute:

Hear thy indictment, Washington, at large;
Attend and listen to the solemn charge:
Thou hast supported an atrocious cause
Against thy King, thy Country, and the laws;
Committed perjury, encourag'd lies,
Forced conscience, broken the most sacred ties. . . .
What could, when half-way up the hill of fame,
Induce thee to go back, and link with shame?

Even Byrd could not do better than Jonathan Odell.



"Pa-uh-uh-uh-uh-uh-uh-uh-uh-uh," by Harriet Berger

WASHINGTON AND A NEGRO POET: Any poll-taxer may get at the time-capsule marked Phillis Wheatley. She was kidnapped in her native Senegal at the age of seven and brought to Boston in 1761. A domestic in a tailor's home, she learned to read. She began to write verse, and her volume, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, was published in 1773. Her poem on the appointment of Washington as Commander-in-Chief brought a letter of thanks from the Virginian, who received the Negro woman at his headquarters. On this anniversary, Congress should hear "His Excellency General Washington":

Celestial choir! enthron'd in realms of light,
Columbia's scenes of glorious toils I write.
While freedom's cause her anxious breast alarms,
She flashes dreadful in refulgent arms. . . .

WASHINGTON AND A CATHOLIC POET: Charles Henry Wharton, an American priest of an old Roman Catholic family in Maryland, happened to be in England at the outbreak of the Revolution. Remaining abroad, his sympathies were nevertheless strongly with the patriots. In 1778 he wrote "A Poetical Epistyle to George Washington," which was first published in America and then in England. As an indication of how many Englishmen opposed George III's war against independence, it is interesting to note that in London the book sold 15,000 copies within three weeks. The proceeds went for the relief of American prisoners of war. Satirizing the corruption and folly of the English cabinet, the poem extols Washington's character:

While many a servile Muse her succor lends
To flatter tyrants, or a tyrant's friends. . . .
Whilst Whitehead [poet laureate] lifts his hero to the skies,
Foretells his conquests twice a year—and lies,
Damns half-starved rebels to eternal shame,
Or paints them trembling at Britannia's name;
Permit an humble bard, great Chief, to raise
One truth-erected trophy to thy praise.

I should like to hear Senator Taft read the ending:

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Great without pomp, without ambition brave,
Proud not to conquer fellowmen, but save;
Friend to the wretched, foe to none but those
Who plan their greatness on their brethren's woes. . . .
The world's great mart, yet not by gold defiled;
To mercy prone, in justice ever mild—
Save to the man who saps great Freedom's roots;
And never cursed with Mansfields, Norths, and Butes!
Such be my country!—what her sons should be,
O may they learn, great Washington, from thee!

WASHINGTON ABROAD: Congress ensemble should read those time-capsules which record the tremendous influence of Washington on the imagination of freedom-loving people in other countries. Byron spoke for many in Europe when he wrote:

And Washington, the tyrant-tamer, wake,
To bid us blush for these old chains, or break.

Washington appears again and again in Bryon's poems—in "The Age of Bronze," "Don Juan," "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"—and always he is the symbol of national freedom:

Whose every battlefield is holy ground,
Which breathes of nations saved, not worlds undone.
How sweetly on the ear such echoes sound!
While the mere victor's may appall or stun
The servile and the vain, such names will be
A watchword till the future shall be free.

For Byron, Washington is the antithesis of Napoleon. To Robert Burns, in his "Ode for General Washington's Birthday" (1794), Washington is the great champion of those who dare proclaim the Royalty of Man:

See gathering thousands, while I sing,
A broken chain, exulting, bring
And dash it in a tyrant's face,
And dare him to his very beard
And tell him he no more is fear'd
No more despot of Columbia's race
A tyrant's proudest insults brav'd
They shout a People freed!
They hail an Empire sav'd.

For William Blake, as for Burns and Byron, Washington was a great challenge and inspiration to the oppressed peoples of Europe; and in "America, a Prophecy" (1793) he sees Washington's face turned toward the East, where the ancient overlords of France, Spain, and Italy, terror-stricken, try to shut

. . . the five gates of their law-built Heaven,
Filled with blasting fancies and with mildews of despair,
With fierce disease and lust, unable to stem the fires of Orc.
But the five gates were consum'd and their bolts and hinges melted;
And the fierce flames burnt round the abodes of men.

The independence struggles of America under Washington's leadership stimulated the struggle for democracy in Russia. Alexander Radyschev hailed Washington in his censored book, *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow,* and in his poetry, where he refers to the American as "an unbending, invincible warrior—freedom's leader." (Of Radyschev, Catherine said: "He is worse than Pugachev; he praises Franklin.") In 1784, Nikolai Novikov, another Russian classicist, wrote "Rome had its Camillus, Greece its Leonidas, and Sweden its Gustav Adolphus, but none of these heroes can compare with George Washington. He has founded a republic which will probably offer refuge to those fighters for freedom driven from Europe." The revolutionary tradition of Washington inspired the Decembrists, aristocratic revolutionaries who rose against the absolute monarchy in St. Petersburg on Dec. 14, 1825. "Oh Brutus, oh Washington!" declared the Decembrist Rayevsky, "I will not degrade myself! I will not be a weak and willess slave lest I earn the contempt of those who are near and dear to me."

WASHINGTON and the Jews, Negroes, Catholics; the Tories; the fighters for freedom in all lands—these are a few capsules that I call to the attention of Congress for its Washington's Birthday agenda. It would make an interesting program, I think. And yet I am troubled by the thought of what an ill-prepared cast of performers might do with it. Perhaps we had better be content with an adjournment.

Review in Retrospect

Joel Bradford invites the reader to examine or reexamine Howard Selsam's "Socialism and Ethics."

SOCIALISM AND ETHICS, *by Howard Selsam. International Publishers. $1.90.*

AS THE venturesome reviewer who undertakes at this date an account of *Socialism and Ethics,* I feel the burden of two difficulties. First of all, the readers of this review will already have read the book and will scarcely need to be persuaded of its merits. They will not in any case be found among those who primarily seek opinions about books rather than the books themselves. In the great world of letters these vicarious judgments are the means by which men acquire the show of culture without the toil of study.

My second difficulty is that I agreed with what the book says. Thus I lack all opportunity for the brilliant stroke, the skillful parry, and (most lamentably of all) the mortal thrust which is to lay our author ignobly upon the ground. It is not for me to complain that Dr. Selsam takes an "extreme" view, that with a terrible frankness he confesses himself materialist, that he resolutely averts his gaze from the spectacle of moral principles floating in upper air, detached from man and things human. This bill of complaints I leave as a kind of syllabus for the many reviewers who, to judge from their silence, are not aware that such a book has been printed and is actually being sold.

It is fair to say that Dr. Selsam has performed a genuinely original task. The extensive reworking of the philosophical disciplines in Marxist terms has thus far been confined largely to the Soviet Union. The great protagonists of Marxism, being mainly concerned with social problems and social action, offer only occasional, though profound, comments on ethical theory. To give this special subject a special treatment, to give Marxist ethics its place in the historical tradition—or rather, conversely, to reveal the history of ethics in the light of Marxist theory—such is the aim of Dr. Selsam's book. He thus undertakes one part of an immense enterprise, which is nothing less than the rescue of philosophy and human culture generally from the philistines who now beset them.

THE book begins by describing the progressive role played by capitalism in its early development and the subsequent clash between an ethics based solely upon the motive of private profit and an ethics which holds in view the general well-being of mankind. It then reviews the chief ethical theories with their historical backgrounds, and argues that for our epoch the test of actions must be whether they contribute to the advancement of the working people of the world as the most numerous, the

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most oppressed, and the most progressive class in modern society. The book then proceeds to an admirable analysis of detailed problems: the family, the state, the nation, science, and freedom. The argument throughout is marked by great clarity, vigor, and freshness of view. Dr. Selsam writes like a man who is not afraid of being understood.

You will get some estimate of Dr. Selsam's contribution, if you compare it with other books upon the subject. For the past fifty years philosophy has been less a careful separating of truths from fictions than a contest between dogmatists and skeptics, in which the dogmatists assert everything and the skeptics deny everything. The dogmatists think that surely something must be true; therefore they expect that by firing a thousand rounds they ought to hit the target at least once. The skeptics know of no thoroughly safe conjecture, and excuse their poor marksmanship on the ground that there is really no target at all.

In ethical theory the dogmatists have founded their principles upon various bases: divine law, moral law, logical law, the structure of the cosmos, evolution, human nature. (I have arranged these in descending order of potency.) The skeptics, however, having cut the ground from under each of these in turn, arrived finally at the assertion that no proof whatever can be given for the validity of any moral principle. They do not mean by this that we are to start running amok, but simply that we shall never know what ultimately justifies our choices. This is absolutely the last word in bourgeois ethical theory, and it was expounded with incontrovertible proof by George E. Moore in 1903.

The argument, in brief, is this. It is possible, say the skeptics, to define goodness in terms of certain qualities; but it is not possible to prove that those qualities are in fact good. If, for example, we are hedonists, we define the good in terms of pleasure; but how can we prove that pleasure is good in itself? Or if, like Dr. Selsam, we are Marxists, we define the ultimate good in terms of socialism, but how can we prove that socialism is in fact good? No doubt we would say it is so because it permits the full flowering of human nature. But then how can we prove that the full flowering of human nature is a good thing? And so *an infinitum*: no matter how many reasons we give, the skeptical imp can always repeat his question.

Thus ethical theory, as twenty-five centuries have set it forth, ends in a paradox; and the existence of the paradox shows that something is wrong with the entire approach. What is wrong is the kind of solution which philosophers have been attempting. Ethics has been treated as a purely theoretical discipline, related no doubt to practice, but seeking proof solely in the consistency and completeness of its own assertions.

Now ethics contains two main problems: that of defining the good, and that of justifying this definition. We are here concerned with the second of these. Why does such a problem arise at all? Why don't men simply define the good and then set about applying the concept to their aims and acts? Well, clearly it is because they disagree about the definition. Various definitions, in fact, compete to be selected; and it begins to appear that there is not only a standard for morals but also a standard for choosing that standard.

Why do men disagree about definitions of the good? They disagree because their interests disagree, and this in turn is due to the conflict of class interests in present and past societies. An ethics expressing the interest of feudal lords could never agree with one expressing the interest of serfs. An ethics which justifies profit-making as sole incentive will not express the interest of those upon whose labor profit is made. It is a sad commentary that ethics has never been able to show *why* socially-minded behavior is better than selfishness. How could it do so, when the main social rewards have been going to the most selfish?

In order really to solve a problem, you have to resume the causes which produced it. Once exploitation and class divisions disappear, the conflict of interests will disappear also; and when they are gone, there will no longer be any need to "justify" ethical principles. No doubt the problem of defining the good will remain, and constant redefinition will be needed as society develops. But the issue of social welfare vs. individual privilege will be settled for all time, and the rival claims of hedonists, stoics, legalists, idealists, and Machiavellians will be dismissed as equally groundless. This is the solution which Marxism gives to the paradox of ethical theory.

Well, if this is true and if philosophers seek, as they say they seek, a solution to the problem, it will follow at once that they ought to embrace Marxism. For the genuine solution is to be found not in a new theory but in the steady advance toward a fully democratic society. In this let them participate with all the wit and energy they possess, and they will permanently rescue ethics from the coils of fruitless disputation.

I hope this discussion will not have seemed a "spectral ballet of bloodless categories." It is not so, but rather one of many ways of stating the firm and very fleshly facts of life. And if, as the truth of our contention spreads, some hundreds of honest, though mildly mystified, philosophers join us in the struggle, that will be an appreciable gain. It will mean for one thing, just so many fewer books to be approved by the *American Mercury* and dehydrated in the *Reader's Digest*. Short of the extinction of these two literary institutions, I can think of no fairer blessing.

So I end as I began, with the same good

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intent and, I fear, the same difficulties. I could have put the whole thing in one sentence: You had better reread the book.

JOEL BRADFORD.

History Explains

THE BALTIC RIDDLE, *by Gregory Meiksins. L. B. Fisher. $3.*

"THE BALTIC RIDDLE" is squarely in the middle of the issues of the day and Mr. Meiksins does an excellent job in unraveling it. Essentially, the Baltic stiuation is no more, and no less, complex than that of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Bessarabia. These areas were all parts of czarist Russia. In all of them revolts occurring approximately at the same time as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 demonstrated the desire of the people of those lands to seek their freedom along the same paths as those of the other Soviet nationalities. In every case, except that of Bessarabia, these embryonic Soviet governments were put down by the Kaiser's armed forces, with puppet states, led by what would now be called quislings, erected in their place. When Germany was defeated, the Allies permitted German troops to remain in occupation of these territories because of their desire to establish a *cordon sanitaire* around the Soviet government. By this means and by the bloodiest suppression of pro-Soviet forces, these governments achieved the appearance of independence, although Washington long withheld recognition, hoping for their inclusion in a "safe" Russia.

As Mr. Meiksins points out, this independence of the Baltic states was a fiction, for economic, historical, political, and military reasons. Economically, the Baltic states had been transit points for the bulk of the sea-borne trade of Russia. They, and the other western borderlands, had developed into the most highly industrialized section of the czarist empire. They manufactured Central Asian cotton into textiles which were resold to Russia, they launched the bulk of the merchant and naval fleets; they built freight cars and engines. Separation from Russia ruined Baltic industry. But when, during the twenties, a moderate Latvian Social-Democratic foreign minister tried to conclude a trade pact with the Soviet Union to save Latvian economy, the Allies vetoed the plan by pressure methods.

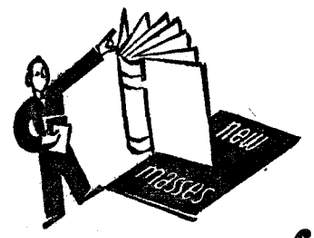
Mr. Meiksins carefully shows how the permanent economic crisis, nearly as severe in agriculture as it was in industry, bred political discontent. This was met first by the illegalization of the Communists, and then, in classic pattern, by the abolition of all democracy and the erection of petty fascist states. In Lithuania Antanas Smetona, inspired by the success of Mussolini, took power in 1926. In Latvia and Estonia Ulmanis and Pats grabbed control the year after Hitler seized German reins. It is these governments which set up so-called democratic constitutions, ruled by violating them, and appointed reactionary ministers to this country who are still around living off "impounded" funds.

Complicating these economic and political factors was the historical residue of years and years of almost unbroken German domination of the Baltics—unbroken in the sense that even under czarist rule the infamous Baltic barons remained the local rulers and generally formed an alliance with the czars for their mutual benefit. The Germans are the historic enemies of the Baltic people and their domination was reinforced under the "independent" Baltic governments set up on the bayonets of the German, von der Goltz, with the aid of a Landswehr raised from among the Baltic *Volksdeutsche*. Latterly, with the accession of Hitler to power, Britain relinquished its influence in the Baltics through its policy of appeasement, and complete German control was assured by a combination of threats, internal aggression through the Baltic Germans, and the Nazi sympathies of the local dictators.

In 1939 the Soviet Union prepared its position in the Baltic by signing, under Hitler's very nose, mutual assistance pacts permitting the establishment of Soviet naval and air bases and border garrisons. Soviet troops completely abstained from interfering in internal affairs. But when these governments were found comspiring against the USSR it insisted on the establishment of governments which would loyally fulfill the mutual assistance pacts. Perhaps the outstanding pages in Mr. Meiksins' book (he himself is a Social Democrat) are his careful descriptions of the extremely broad and democratic governments which were formed and whose establishment was confirmed in an election held for the first time in many years. These are the governments now waiting to return to their capitals after liberation by the Red Army and the Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian troops within it.

I hope that Mr. Meiksins will eventually write another book on how socialism will have developed in the area he knows so well. At that time he may be able to strengthen what I consider even now to be an unnecessarily weak description of the economic and cultural revival which took place in the year of Soviet rule before June 22, 1941. I would like to have felt, too, the participation of the masses in a change whose leading figures he describes far more completely than the people who made it. It would also be of value if in the interests of the facts Mr. Meiksins would reconsider his whitewash of the Social-Democratic leaders of the period between the two world wars, particularly as it concerns their responsibility for the coming of reaction to their countries. But these criticisms do not alter the fact that this is a most timely and informative book.

WILLIAM B. CRONIN.



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SIGHTS and SOUNDS

"DECISION"

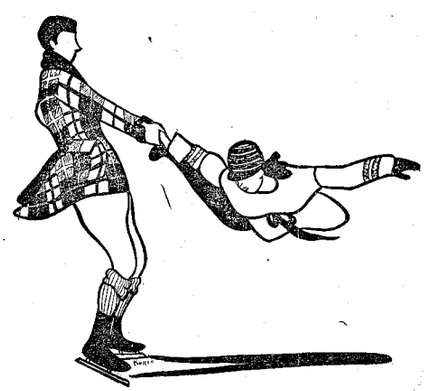
The most important play of the year deals with the issues of the here and now. . . . A triumph for Broadway. . . . Reviewed by Harry Taylor.

APPLAUSE and curtain calls for Edward Chodorov, playwright, and Edward Choate, producer, of *Decision*, who show daring, imagination, and a deep understanding of what is possible in the theater today. By this enterprise, Broadway has taken a sizable step into the realities and issues of our time and has made a striking contribution to the national welfare. For Edward Chodorov sets the action of his newest play in "An American city, in the present." And immediately the curtain goes up with its electric symbol of hands throttling a viper, we recognize how pertinent and how terribly true is this designation of place and time. This drama of a brave, undeviating fight against fascism at home might have transpired in Boston or Los Angeles, in the Brooklyn-Stuyvesant district or down New Orleans way, or in [illegible] a tiny village as Hillburn, N. Y. The [illegible]-hating, Jew-hating, Negro-hating [illegible]paper-owner who helps incite a race riot in the local war factory and does all he can to hamper the war against the Axis in order to nurture developing fascism in the United States, may be known by any one of the many names which the President and Wallace and Ickes have so often used. The prototypes of the corrupt and ruthless senator who is the demon behind the community's fifth-column activities, sit on the mightiest legislative committees on Capitol Hill. And just as recognizable, if not by name—for they are the many, the people—are the educator, the labor leader, the small business man, the housewife and the Negro who unite to defeat and destroy these enemies of common humanity. Yes, *Decision* is indeed a play of the here and now. And it compels the most earnest audience participation precisely on the basis of the fateful choice Americans must make this year between the forces represented by Roosevelt and those of the Hoover-Wheeler-Hearst cabal.

The story the play tells is suitably simple and direct. Riggs, the principal of the local high school, has been instrumental in quieting the passions aroused by the bloody riot. A broad citizens' committee persuades him to take leadership in unifying the people of the town against the traitorous senator and his accomplice, the publisher. When the publisher learns that Riggs has presented to the Attorney-General affidavits and documents proving that he and the senator instigated the riot and indicating a link between them and Axis groups, he tries to frighten Riggs into withdrawing from the committee. His threats being ineffective, he has the austere old man framed on a charge of rape. The police take Riggs into "protective custody" and, in the fashion of this dread fiction, kill him and then attempt to mask his death as suicide. But thousands of workers and townsfolk made known their wish to rally at his funeral and there to dedicate themselves to fight together against the murderous reaction of the senator and his friends.

Chodorov has written this story with an eloquence which often excites applause in the midst of its scenes. It is evidence of the great strength and absorbing interest of the central conflict that whenever he pauses to lighten or to decorate it, we are not happy until he returns to the dominant theme. Riggs is deeply impressive in his uncompromising concern for a better world. We recognize his stature and our hearts rise with every word and act of his struggle against the common enemy. The publisher is as lucidly drawn. When he has completed his self-portrait compounded of hate and lies and murder, we understand clearly the nature of our choice in this year of decision. And we feel deeply the truth of Riggs' utterance to his soldier-son that we are in the midst of a civil war at home which must be won as surely as the war abroad.

Precisely because this play is so trenchant and important, it would be a symptom of indifference or carelessness not to say something about its structural weakness. So much of its action takes place off stage, that there is not enough on stage for us to go along with. This is what probably accounts for the unfortunate division of the evening into one play during the first two acts in which Riggs is the center, and into another play during the final act in which his soldier son becomes the protagonist. Apparently Chodorov believes that this is not a schism but a manifest unity because the decision to battle fascism at home must be made by both the civilian and the returning soldier. And, of course, this is a correct analysis. But to have made it dramatically potent, Chodorov would have had to let us share the visual agony of Riggs' death in the third act and to witness and to participate in the anger and determination of the townspeople. Then the boy's last-minute declaration that he will take up his father's fight would have emerged with dynamic inevitability, truly becoming the missing and necessary supplement to Riggs' decision.



I hope this criticism doesn't sound ungrateful. For the play surmounts its flaws with a terrific wallop. I came out of the Belasco deeply stirred and convinced that *Decision* is to date far and beyond the most forthright and courageous stage presentation of the evil which we fear above all others, and that it is a great call for all good men to get together in common cause.

Raymond Greenleaf plays Riggs with dignity and integrity. He is supported by a cast which includes Matt Crowley as the believable fascist publisher; the lively and infectious Georgia Burke in one of the most decently written Negro roles our stage has seen; Howard Smith, who got all the sleazy, vicious values of the framing lawyer into his one extremely effective scene; Rusty Lane, who does a touching job as the lawyer who brings us the news of Riggs' murder; Jean Casto, who is fresh and mordantly comic as Riggs' secretary; Merle Maddern, who carries off a confusing part with skill; and Gwen Anderson, who is lovely to look at as the soldier's sweetheart. I thought the part of the soldier was poorly written and so directed as to be jumpy and over-businessed. Larry Hugo's playing is scarcely a help. Frederick Fox did the two settings, providing an interesting contrast between the formalism of the school office and the fussiness of the Riggs' living room.

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I am sure the fascists and the Roosevelt haters will not want any part of this play. But I am just as certain that all democratically minded men and women will want to see it and that when they do they will respond to it with a sympathetic anger, and a fighting hope welling up from their own experience of life. Put *Decision* on your must list, and see it soon.

HARRY TAYLOR.

Technicolor by Hearst

New committee to save Hollywood from everything progressive.

MR. HEARST'S helpers have been busy again. This time they have prepared and tied up a neatly dangerous little bundle called the Motion Picture Alliance—an organization "for the preservation of American ideals," which finds itself in sharp revolt against a rising tide of Communism . . . and kindred beliefs which resents the "growing impression that this industry is made up of an dominated by Communists, radicals, and crackpots."

Look at the line-up. Sam Wood, president, is a producer scarcely known as a friend of the Jews. First Vice-President Walt Disney fought the unionization of the industry consistently and with great thoroughness. As for Rupert Hughes, a member of the executive council, novelist, so-called humorist, and distorter of American history—his weekly anti-Soviet, anti-administration broadcasts over NBC speak for him. These nauseating and sharply fascist diatribes are often good for a big play on the editorial pages of the Hearst sheets.

Undoubtedly the Alliance is intended as a blow at progressive Hollywood and the many fine pro-war films that have come out of the industry's center. A recent editorial in the Hearst NY *Journal American,* whose language is almost identical with that of the MPA's "Statement of Principles," is the giveaway: "The subversive minority in the industry has connived to produce a long succession of insidious and evil motion pictures to the discredit of the industry and to the detriment of the country. . . . It has made pictures glorifying Communist Russia, ignoring the oppressive and tyrannical character of Bolshevism and inventing virtues for it that have never existed." One recalls, of course, Hearst's four-footed attacks on all films about the Soviet Union, particularly Lillian Hellman's *North Star,* and *Mission to Moscow.*

This is not the first time that Hitler's old divisive tactic has been used on the West Coast. State Sen. Jack Tenney, California's Dies, whose senate investigating committee whitewashed the Sinarquistas in connection with fifth-column activities, pretended to believe the Hollywood Writers Congress held in Los Angeles last year, was a Red plot. He demanded that the university close its doors to the cultural gathering of writers, educators, and members of the armed forces. Tenney's attempt failed —the university and the conference's participants refused to be awed by the bogey and the Writers' Congress was held as scheduled.

The Motion Picture Alliance will without doubt bring a similar reaction. The Los Angeles *Examiner* (Hearst) announced that there were 200 present at the organization's first meeting; the Los Angeles *Times* counted seventy-five. Nobody was able to find more than two actors. Further, and more important, the "vast, unorganized majority" whom the Alliance claims to represent, have proved themselves on the whole, pro-war administration supporters. They realize the meaning of Teheran and are wholeheartedly for carrying out the decisions made there. And we are sure they will not be led into fascist, anti-United Nations' groups.

M. D.

The Film Week

"The Sullivans" strikes a warm note . . . "Jane Eyre" . . . "Three Russian Girls."

OF THE hundreds of instances of self-sacrifice that have come out of the war, perhaps the most moving, the most compassionate is that of the Sullivans of Waterloo, Ia., whose five boys went down with the *Juneau* in the battle of the Solomons. To the Roxy has now come the film limning their history. It is a warm stirring saga of an Irish-American family, rich with the details of living, of five brawling lusty youngsters, full of hell and contrition, rent with quarrels one moment, united in loyalty and affection the next. The biographical picture is neither sentimentalized nor idealized, and if the tenor of their days partakes of the commonplace in the telling, it is only because the story of the Sullivans is the record of small-town America, recognizable and familiar.

In its over-all quality, *The Sullivans* is a fine human document, full of a number of memorable touches. Out of the cradle endlessly rocking, grew the five boys, through Communion, gang fights, their first stolen smoke. One, the youngest, falls in love and acquires a wife and baby. Then comes Pearl Harbor, whose bombing shatters not only battleships and harbor installations but the manners and habits of peacetime America. The Sullivans enlist in the Navy, and are granted their fervent request to fight together on one ship.

The news of the death of the five is beautifully managed, and it is due to director Lloyd Bacon, writers Mary McCall, Jr., Edward Doherty, and Jules Schermer, and to an almost brand new movie cast that the picturization of this family comes off so well. Selena Royale as the mother and Thomas Mitchell as the father infuse their parts with believability and they steady the youngsters who play the early part of the film with firm and subtle control. Except for Anne Baxter, the sweetheart of the youngest Sullivan, all the actors are new to the films.

Yet, despite the social relations which the family's activities must have invited, there is almost no community interaction between the Sullivans and the rest of the town. They live in a cocoon spun of their clannish preoccupations. When they walk down the street, no other people are to be seen. Neighbors, shopkeepers, co-workers are never a part of their gossip or interest. I do not mean to carp, yet if the film has a major defect, this is it. The subject is loaded with "human interest," and I am certain that there was a difficult problem in the selection of incidents. Nor can every aspect of existence be crowded into one picture, which as it stands runs very well over two hours. But even a minimal community life would have enriched the story, made it more realistic, would have emphasized even the flavor of their own inner family habits, and would have rooted the Sullivans more firmly in the pattern of American life, as they must have been in actuality.

Today the sole daughter of the family has symbolized the sacrifice of the Sullivans by joining the Waves. The film-makers introduce this fact at a commemorative launching of the warship, USS *The Sullivans.* It is a fitting conclusion to the story of one American family that is in the war all the way.

"JANE EYRE," the film version of the Charlotte Bronte novel, is meant to be a tale of dark and brooding horror—instead, it is a disappointing and slog-footed creeper. In an attempt to recapture the sultry and forbidding sections of the novel, the film brushes aside the heroine's struggles to escape the tightrope of feminine decorum in Victorian England. Thus critics have called the picture escapist. They are probably right, but it needn't have been, even by its own terms. That is to say, *Jane Eyre* fails not because it chooses to dwell upon the agonies of Edward Rochester, Jane's tormented love interest, but because of the treatment of the material.

The book creates authentic and morbid horror by the situations in which the characters are placed and the exploitation of their reactions. With so skillful and sensitive an actor as Orson Welles as Rochester, supported by Joan Fontaine as Jane, and a cast of able assistants, the picture should have been a lollopaloosa. But instead of following the knowing lead of the novel, the movie's producers lean almost exclusively upon the externalia of melodrama: the carefully guarded door, the shriek in the night, the clanking of unseen chains, mysterious fires, groans and shadows, and wild storms. The interiors are

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dimly lit by flickering candles, the exteriors shrouded in fog and mist. Thus the menacing secret, the unknown portent upon which the film depends, rests on the special effect talents of the studio, rather than upon the writers. This technique is followed so relentlessly that when the carefully guarded door is finally unlocked, the fires explained, the secret bared, the whole business turns out to be anti-climax to the crepuscular flummery that all but chokes the life out of Bronte.

According to the credit list, Orson Welles is not part of the producing staff. Nevertheless, so many of his characteristic technical touches are present that I suspect he had more than an acting interest in the film. The photography, for instance, is full of the coincidental focusing of foreground and background that made his previous pictures so effective. But in *Jane Eyre* the device becomes heavily theatrical. It is true that details are fixed with sharpness and clarity. This quality at its best is reminiscent of such men as Eisenstein. But while the Soviet movie makers' photography is full of the juices of life, here all is quiet; not a cloud moves, not a blade of grass stirs. The result is a series of portraits, sometimes beautiful but always static. As a consequence of this immobility, the actors seem to perform with an air of self-conscious artifice, so that the love scenes are dry and stagey and unbelievable.

One aspect of the film that irked the audience was the semi-darkness responsible for its tone. Perhaps there was an extra reason for it. I saw the show right before the dinner hour, and all around me hungry people were consulting their watches without success. It wasn't until the ski-jump shots in the newsreel that they could discover it was time to go home.

THE American remake of *Girl From Leningrad* finally made its appearance as *Three Russian Girls*, and with the notable exceptions of the *Times* and the *News*, the papers cried stinking fish. One critic (*Mirror*) didn't like it because the Red Armymen and nurses sing too much. Another (*Sun*) objected to the picture because she saw no reason for imitating the original, especially when she disliked the original. All the others griped about the fact that it was not as good as the Soviet product and that Hollywood prettified the gals too much. If that is valid criticism, then *What So Proudly We Hail* is equally reprehensible for the same reason, and *Cry Havoc* is a red ink item only because it is inferior to the last-named.

As a matter of record, *Three Russian Girls* has a number of defects, but they are of a minor character. It is so closely modeled on the original that its virtues are the virtues of its precursor, as are its faults. The beautifully filmed battle sequences are lifted intact, and these are grafted on to some bits of Hollywood hand-to-hand

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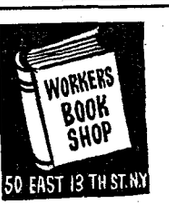

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conflict which, though not possessing the same quality, extend the action somewhat.

The American picture's major departure from the original *Girl From Leningrad* is the introduction of an American flier who falls in love with the nurse commander. It is my opinion that the writers meant this character to serve as a symbol of unity between the two countries. The critics were so busy lambasting the picture that this point was missed entirely. For instance, when the flier is emerging from a postoperative coma, shaken and frightened, the nurse quiets him with the assurance that he is in the hands of friends and that he must have confidence in them. At another point, the flier expresses his hatred for the Nazis and paraphrases Lincoln with the observation that a world half slave and half free cannot endure. The picture closes with a farewell scene as the flier departs for Murmansk—in which he hopes that all the peoples of the world will soon be able to sit around a huge table and celebrate a thanksgiving for victory.

Unfortunately the film dwells a little too lovingly on the personal relationship between the flier and the nurse and thus overemphasizes the romantic motif. Even at that, the affair is handled with adult care and taste, and is never permitted to get out of hand.

The critic who thought that it was superfluous to remake Soviet films along American lines was talking through his professional hat. Any film that contributes to a better understanding of the Russian people is all to the good.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

Elephant on a Tightrope

(*Continued from page 4*)

licans sneered at democracy and worked to emasculate it. Up at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee insiders are fairly optimistic that Thomas Dewey will win the Republican nomination. And, they say, what chance have the Republicans if the American people realize that the next international conference could find Churchill and Stalin sitting down with—Dewey!

Yet any tendency to think that the election is in the bag (or even Roosevelt's nomination) would be one of the surest ways of helping to lose it. Let no one underestimate the capacity of the Republicans to confuse and beguile, particularly in the rural sections and in the small towns outside the mainstream of war industry. The trend revealed in the local elections last November hardly offers ground for complacence. And it ought to be remembered too that it is not enough to re-elect the President; if we are to change the present anti-Teheran Congress into a pro-Teheran one, capable of meeting the great responsibilities of the peace, there is enough to keep all of us busy until election day.

BRUCE MINTON.

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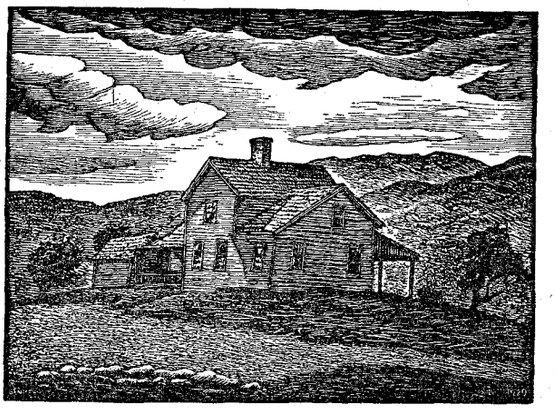

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